DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 430 126 CE 078 651

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TITLE The Fantastic Facilitator: Engaging Activities for Leading Groups.
INSTITUTION National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson, SC.
PUB DATE 1997-00-00
NOTE 101p.
AVAILABLE FROM National Dropout Prevention Center, College of Health, Education, and Human Development, Clemson University, 209 Martin Street, Clemson, SC 29634-0726; Tel: 864-656-2599; Web site: http://www.dropoutprevention.org/ ($24.50).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom - Teacher (052)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Check Lists; *Conflict Resolution; *Decision Making; Group Behavior; *Group Dynamics; Leaders Guides; Leadership; Leadership Responsibility; *Leadership Training; Learning Activities; Questionnaires; Role Playing; Self Evaluation (Groups); Self Evaluation (Individuals); *Teamwork
IDENTIFIERS *Facilitative Leadership; *Facilitators; Goal Setting

ABSTRACT

This document is designed to help facilitators with the formation and development of effective teams of people who have no previous history as a team and no training in group processes. Part 1 provides a narrative explanation of the stages of group development (investing in membership, forming attachments to subgroups, confronting/debating issues, sharing responsibility) and the following aspects of developing effective groups: becoming a skilled facilitator (coordinating team-building activities, guiding the agenda, clarifying the group's goals, keeping discussions on topic; equalizing participation, soliciting feedback, testing for agreement, identifying and implementing decisions); developing a cooperative-goal structure (establishing a climate of trust, establishing open and complete communication, using positive behavior strategies, rewarding group accomplishment); handling controversy constructively (guidelines for constructive controversy, how to tell whether controversy has been handled constructively); making effective decisions; and improving group effectiveness. Concluding part 1 is a list of six resources. Part 2 is an activities section that contains the strategies, processes, and activities mentioned in part 1. Among the activities included are the following: team-building activities; personality orientation checklist; positive behavior cards; group discussion activities; questionnaires; simulations and role play activities; and participant reaction forms. (MN)

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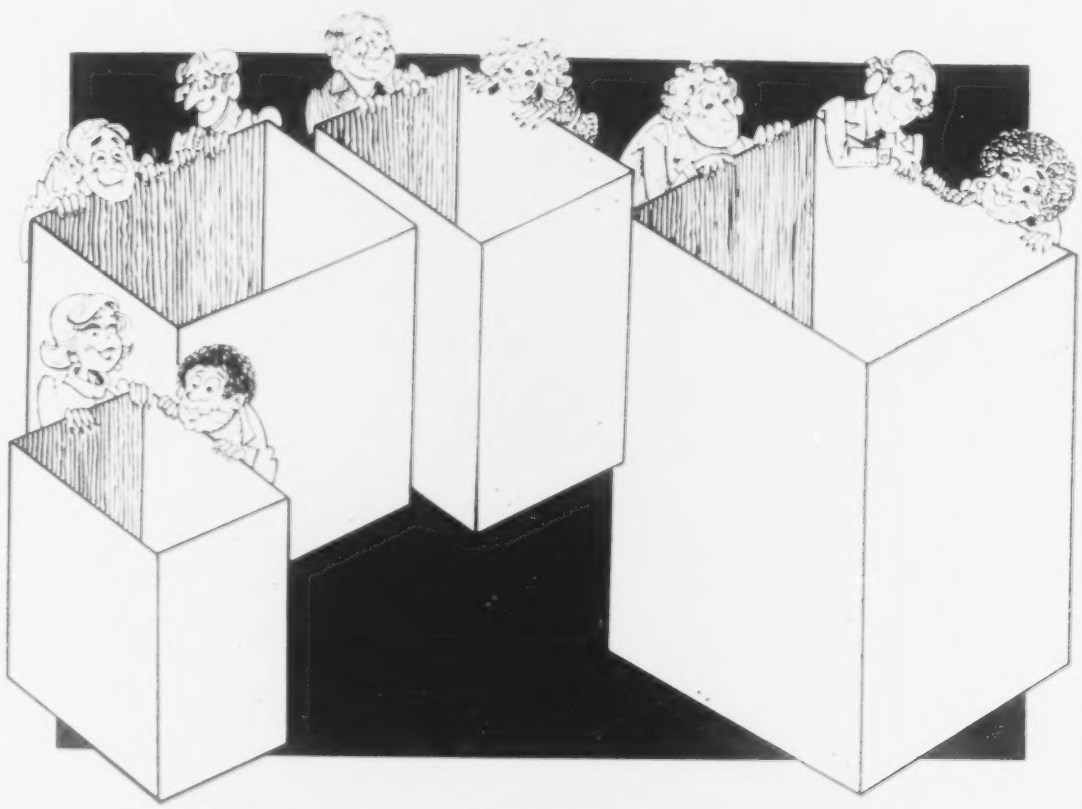
The Fantastic Facilitator:

Engaging Activities for Leading Groups



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Engaging Activities for Leading Groups

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Teamwork

"Coming together is a beginning;
keeping together is progress;
working together is success."

Henry Ford

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Table of Contents

Introduction 5

Part One

Stages of Group Development 7
Developing Effective Groups 8
- A Skilled Facilitator 9
  - Coordinate Team-Building Activities 9
  - Guide the Agenda 9
  - Clarify Goals of the Group 10
  - Keep the Discussion on Topic 10
  - Equalize Participation 12
  - Solicit Feedback 12
  - Test for Agreement 12
  - Identify and Implement Decision 13
- A Cooperative-Goal Structure 14
  - Establishing a Climate of Trust 14
  - Establishing Open, Complete Communication 16
  - Using Positive Behavior Strategies 18
  - Rewarding Group Accomplishment 22
- Handling Controversy Constructively 23
  - Guidelines for Constructive Controversy 24
  - How to Tell Whether Controversy Has Been Handled Constructively 27
- Making Effective Decisions 28
- Improving Group Effectiveness 29

Resources 31

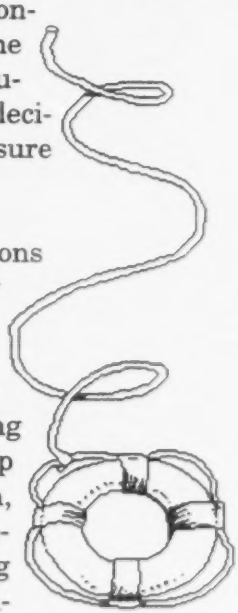
Activities Section

- Team Building Activities 35
- Personality Orientation 43
- Positive Behavior Cards 51
- Handling Controversy 57
- Group Decision-Making Processes 75
- Hijacked in the Desert Activity 93
- Alien Zoo Activity 99
- Assessing Group Effectiveness 121

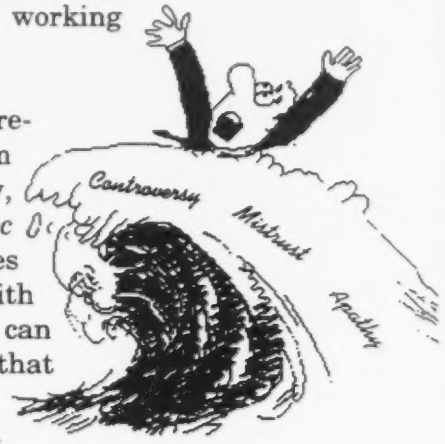
Introduction

What Is the Purpose of This Book?

From W. Edward Deming's *Out of Crisis* to Peter Senge's *The Fifth Discipline*, from Total Quality Management to Systemic Reform, the message is loud and clear—decision making and problem solving should include the people who are responsible for carrying out the work, who can identify the problems, and who have some idea of what solutions are needed. Teams come up with better decisions and solutions; group commitment can ensure effective implementation.



Unfortunately, there are too many situations where a group of people with no previous history as a team and with no training in group processes end up having to work together. All too often, a supervisor or coordinator becomes the leader of a group with the task of implementing new policies or procedures. All too often, a group of people get together to develop an action plan, coordinate an event, or solve a problem, and someone ends up becoming a facilitator without having the faintest idea how to mold heretofore independent, autonomous individuals into a working team.



This book is designed as a life preserver, to help keep a facilitator from being swamped in a flood of controversy, mistrust, and apathy. *The Fantastic Facilitator* provides some basic activities for developing an effective team—one with a cooperative goal structure, one that can handle controversy constructively, one that makes high-quality decisions, and one dedicated to improving its functioning.

How to Use The Fantastic Facilitator!

Part One provides a narrative explanation of the stages of group development, the facilitator's responsibilities, how to develop effective groups, how to handle controversy effectively, suggestions for making effective decisions, and ways to improve group effectiveness. The Activities Section contains the strategies, processes, and activities mentioned in the narrative. This book is three-hole punched and shrink wrapped so that it can be put in your own notebook binder. In this way, the activities in the Activities Section can be removed and copied.

Who will benefit from using *The Fantastic Facilitator*? Anyone who is responsible for leading a team, works as part of a team, or uses teams in classroom activities. It can be used by social workers, community leaders, business trainers, anyone responsible for professional development, school administrators, counselors, and teachers.

It should be noted that the strategies and activities in this book can be used with youth as well as with adults. For cooperative learning, service learning, committees, or any other group activity to be successful, youth must be trained in group processes and how to work together in a group just as much as adults need to be trained.

Like trees, teams grow and develop; teams need to be nurtured and encouraged through the early stages. When mature, however, they provide a wonderful reward—effective, high-quality decisions and a commitment to implement those decisions.

7

Stages of Group Development

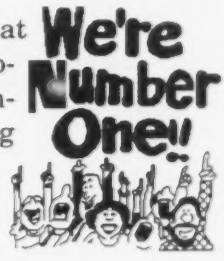
Most groups go through a number of stages in learning to work together. While there are different of terms for these stages, groups usually go through the following:

Investing in Membership (Forming)—Group cohesion is almost nonexistent. Members are part of the group because they have been "selected" by a supervisor, they have been invited to participate, or they have volunteered because of the tasks or goals. At this stage, members have not decided to invest their time and energy in *this* group membership.

Attachment to Subgroups (Storming)—Most people begin identifying with subgroups with which they have something in common. At first, these commonalities may have to do with gender, age, race, or position. As the issues are clarified, however, members tend to seek out those who seem to share their opinions and perspectives regardless of other attributes.

Confrontation/Debating Issues (Norming)—Some groups never get beyond the stage of engaging in the confrontations that develop as the various perspectives become known. Members become focused on the differences in their opinions or perspectives and never look for the agreements or areas in which to compromise. Members fail to understand or respect the perspectives of others and argue exclusively for their own. Unless group members deal with controversy and clearly establish the rules (or norms) by which they will work, the group will become stalemated and accomplish little. The group will never move to debating issues and ideas in ways that will allow them to accomplish the task.

Shared Responsibility (Performing)—Groups that have clarified the issues and handled controversy effectively will reach the stage where members accept a shared responsibility for moving the group forward toward reaching its goals. Groups at the stage of shared responsibility are characterized as effective.



Developing Effective Groups

Groups that reach the stage of *shared responsibility* are effective groups. At this stage, trust and acceptance characterize group communication and interaction, the members are able to work together to accomplish a task, and they deal effectively with any controversy that arises.

A collection of individuals does not magically develop into an effective group that accepts shared responsibility. Individuals often need help in understanding themselves and others. They need to establish rules to guide group interaction. They need to understand and accept the roles and responsibilities that come with being a member of a task-oriented, problem-solving group. They need to be willing to surface the hidden agendas and suppressed emotions that interfere with accomplishing the group's task. In other words, a collection of individuals needs to work hard at learning how to become an effective group. And the responsibility of the facilitator is to help them achieve this goal.

Characteristics of Effective Groups

The group has a skilled facilitator.

A cooperative goal structure is established and maintained.

Controversy is handled effectively.

Effective decisions result from using a variety of appropriate decision-making processes.

Members work to improve group effectiveness.

A Skilled Facilitator

The facilitator is the key to developing an effective group. The facilitator has a number of responsibilities that, when carried out efficiently, can help a group develop into one that shares responsibility. From guiding the agenda and ensuring equal participation to implementing the decision, the facilitator's primary goal is to make sure that group members are comfortable within the group and feel free to express their opinions openly, because if they don't, nothing of significance can be accomplished. Each of the following facilitator responsibilities is focused on developing a cohesive, efficient, and effective group.

Coordinate Team-Building Activities

The facilitator can help create a cohesive, cooperative team by planning a team-building activity to begin each meeting. The activity does not need to be long, but it should help members better understand each other, feel more trusting toward each other, and/or help set the stage for the purpose of the meeting. Whatever type of activity is chosen (see Activities Section, page 35), the facilitator must schedule time for the group to discuss the relevance of the activity and what they learned or accomplished by doing the activity.

Guide the Agenda

An important function of the group facilitator is to introduce and guide the agenda. To avoid lost time, frustration, and confusion, there should be clearly defined goals for all meetings (to explore, to plan, to decide, to design). Ideally, the agenda is passed out to members in sufficient time *before* the meeting so

that the members come prepared. The facilitator should read the agenda items aloud and add, eliminate, and set priorities among the items. The agenda should focus the group on the task at hand.

Clarify Goals of the Group

To function effectively, a group must understand clearly what its goals are. The first step the facilitator of every group must take is to lead the group in clarifying what their mission is—the reason for the group's existence. Once the group's mission is clear, the facilitator should make sure the group understands the purpose of every meeting and the meeting's expected outcomes. Another important area that should be clear from the beginning is the group's authority—is the group purely advisory or does it have the authority and resources to make and carry out decisions?

Keep the Discussion on Topic

The facilitator should be aware of the tendency of group members to get sidetracked or to go into unnecessary detail on an issue. It is the facilitator's responsibility to help the discussion get back on track. It is important that the group select a *Keeper of the Rules* for each meeting. Making sure the group keeps on task and that members follow the rules established by the group is the primary function of that role. When the group is off task, the *Keeper of the Rules* or another group member may call attention to this fact. The facilitator then has the responsibility to interrupt the discussion. The facilitator should be friendly and firm and use eye contact to make connection to interrupt the person talking.

Adjust to the Climate of the Group

There are times when special techniques are called for to handle a difficult group situation or a member who is persistent, frustrated, or deliberately provoking. The following strategies usually work:

- ***Redirect***—Facilitators do not have to handle every question or suggestion. It is always appropriate for the facili-

tator to redirect questions or suggestions to the group as a whole saying, "What do you think?"

- ***Question the Situation***—At times the group may act unusually hostile, quiet, or defensive. At such a time, the facilitator can ask, "What's going on here?"

- ***Recall Focus***—When the discussion shifts focus to an item that was not on the agenda, the facilitator should remind the group that they need to finish discussing agenda items. When the discussion skips to a later step in a process being used by the group, the facilitator should remind the group, "We have jumped to discussing solutions before all the problems have been identified."

- ***Recognize Contribution***—When someone states the obvious, repeats (for the third time) something that has been said before, or gives an opinion that doesn't exactly belong at this point, the facilitator should acknowledge the contribution and move quickly back to the topic of discussion—"Thanks for that comment, Joe. Now, how are we going to...."

- ***Acknowledge Disagreement***—When a group member expresses frustration or makes negative comments, the facilitator should acknowledge the frustration or negative comment, express the hope that the member's ideas might change as the group progresses toward its goal, and continue the meeting. "You believe the group process is too slow, Dena. Will you give it a chance? I hope you'll find out it really is effective." Or even, "You don't think that will work? You may be right."

- ***Defer Discussion***—If an item of interest is brought up that is not on the agenda, ask if it can be added to a list of things to discuss at the next meeting.

- ***Use Humor***—Sometimes poking fun at yourself or making a witty comment will diffuse a tense situation. However, never use sarcasm or make fun of someone else.

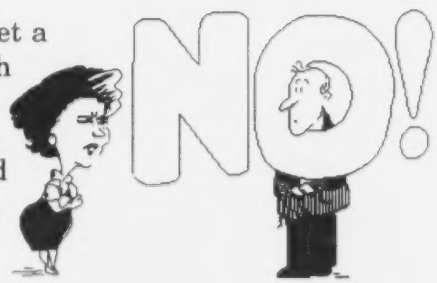
Equalize Participation

A variety of techniques are available for facilitators to equalize participation and encourage full involvement of all members in discussions. The most direct approach is to simply ask silent members if they have anything to say, and to request over-participating, dominating members to refrain from speaking at times. Other techniques for equalizing participation include structural procedures such as using behavior cards (to be discussed later), round robin, brainstorming, nominal group technique, and *Sift and Sort* which are included in the Activities Section.

Solicit Feedback

The facilitator speaks for the group and needs the group's endorsement for doing so. The facilitator should regularly ask for acceptance, feedback, agreement or disagreement on any rephrasing, clarification, redefinition, summary, and/or reformulation statements. It is important for the group to reject such statements if they are incorrect.

It is extremely valuable to set a tone of openness for the group, with the expectation that the group will monitor the facilitator. One function of the *Keeper of the Rules* should be to make sure the facilitator is, in fact, *facilitating* not *controlling*.



Test for Agreement

When the facilitator senses that agreement may be close, he/she should ask the group if they do, in fact, agree. The proposed agreement being tested should be fully stated. When testing for agreement, the facilitator should do so in a tentative way that leaves room for input, correction, and disagreement as well as for affirmation. Group members should feel free to disagree with the facilitator if there is any question about exactly what was agreed upon.

Identify and Implement Decision

Once a decision is made, the facilitator should make sure that everyone understands *what the decision is* and *what the decision is not* and make sure it gets recorded. *Whatever is agreed upon should be written down and read back to the group for approval.* Also, the group should decide *how* the decision will be carried out. *Who* will take responsibility to see that it is done? What *resources* will be needed? By *when* will it be done? Having the group complete an *Action Plan* similar to the one in the Activities Section can help clarify the responsibilities. In addition, an action plan can identify *outcomes* of the action and specify if any kind of review or *follow-up* was necessary.

A Cooperative Goal Structure

To reach the shared responsibility stage of development, a group must establish a cooperative goal structure. A *cooperative goal structure* exists when group members are willing to subordinate purely personal goals to work with others to achieve common, group goals. The objective is to accomplish a task well or to make the best possible group decision. A cooperative goal structure can be created within a group by

- ✿ Establishing a climate of trust
- ✆ Establishing open, complete communication
- ✌ Using positive behavior strategies
- ☆ Rewarding group accomplishment

✿ Establishing a Climate of Trust

Conduct Team-Building Activities

A feeling of trust and an understanding of others in the group increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the group. Every meeting should begin with team-building exercises. *Team building is trust building*, which is essential to effective group functioning. When a group is newly formed, team building should be a major focus. As the group matures, short activities will be sufficient. Any activity that helps members know and understand each other better is a valuable team builder. It is vital, however, that the activities the facilitator chooses to use are meaningful to the group. It is the facilitator's responsibility to ensure there is enough time to debrief every team-building activity so that the group can discuss the activity's purpose. Several activities are included in the Activities Section.

Define Rules for Group Interaction

Establishing the rules that will guide group interaction is an important step that is too often overlooked for developing trust. If every group member has a part in establishing these rules, many of the problems encountered in typical group meetings can be avoided. The rules can cover any areas the group deems appropriate. The following are some of the issues that might be considered or clarified:

- ***Responsibilities***—Who will be responsible for meeting notices, assembling the agenda, guiding group discussion? Who will keep a record of the discussion/decisions? Who will keep track of the time allotted for different tasks/ discussions?

- ***Rules for Interaction***—What are the rules for group interaction? These are especially important for developing a secure feeling of trust within the group.

A Sample Set of Rules

1. *Meetings will begin and end on time.*
2. *Everyone will have an opportunity to speak.*
3. *No one will monopolize the discussion.*
4. *All questions and comments relevant to the task are acceptable.*
5. *What is discussed in the group, stays in the group.*
6. *Ideas, not personalities, are discussed.*
7. *Discussion will focus on the task and stay on target.*
8. *A Keeper of the Rules will monitor group interaction—a bell, noisemaker, or "T" signal made with the hands will indicate to the members when the discussion is off task.*

Keeper of the Rules—Monitoring Group Processes

The *Keeper of the Rules* is a member of the group who has been designated to observe group interaction and monitor group behavior. Sometimes referred to as a *process monitor, task master,* or *enforcer,* the *Keeper of the Rules* is the group's "watchdog" to make sure the group observes its own rules. Instead of a single process monitor, the entire group may take on the responsibility. The facilitator, *Keeper of the Rules*, or anyone else who notices that the group discussion has shifted from the original intent can interrupt with comments like "I think we've wandered away from our focus." Providing a bell, clicker, or noise maker to use when rules are broken or negative behaviors surface, offers the group a humorous way to ensure effective group behavior.

✆ Establishing Open, Complete Communication

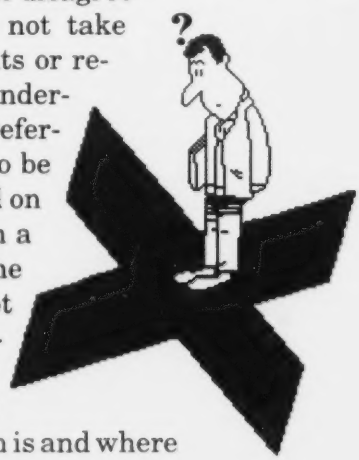
Open, honest, complete, and effective communication should be worked for continually. Members should generate ideas, collect and organize relevant information, reason logically, and make tentative conclusions based on current understanding. Members should present their perspectives and the rationale for their positions. Members should discuss problems within the group and not create dissension by complaining or criticizing outside the group. Communication also includes emotions, and members should feel free to express their emotions during discussions.

17

Different Perspectives

Each member brings a different perspective into a group. Therefore, every member should take an active part in group discussions. Members should express their ideas and feelings openly and honestly without defensiveness. Every member has a responsibility to share her/his knowledge and opinions. The group's task is to come up with the best decisions and solutions, and to do this, every member must contribute.

Perspectives are shaped by our physical structure, our temperament, our personalities, and our experiences. Given the influences that shape our views, it is no wonder disagreements arise. Group members should not take personally other members' disagreements or rejection of their ideas, but should try to understand both the position and the frame of reference of the other. For communication to be truly open, an emphasis should be placed on viewing any issue under discussion from a variety of perspectives. Understanding the statements of another member is not enough; the frame of reference or perspective from which the member is speaking must also be clearly understood. In other words, you need to know where the person is and where he or she is coming from!



Personality Orientation. Using the *Personality Orientation Scale* is one way to identify the ways members tend to approach communication and problem solving. The *Personality Orientation* activities will help everyone understand the personality basis for different perspectives. Instructions for conducting the activity and master copies of the scale are in the Activities Section on page 43.

✌ Using Positive Behavior Strategies

There are certain behaviors that must be carried out within a group for it to develop its problem-solving and task-completion skills. While every group needs someone to take responsibility for facilitating the discussion, someone to record the discussion, someone to keep track of time, and someone to make sure the group is following its own rules, it is important to realize that many group responsibilities should be assumed by all the group members.

Each of the following strategies is important for effective group interaction and the successful accomplishment of the group's task. Effective facilitators encourage and help their group's members develop and improve these strategies. Both positive and negative strategies, observable behaviors, and the effects of such behaviors on the group are listed in the *Strategies, Behaviors, and Effects on Groups* chart in the Activities Section on page 73.

Contribute to Group's Knowledge

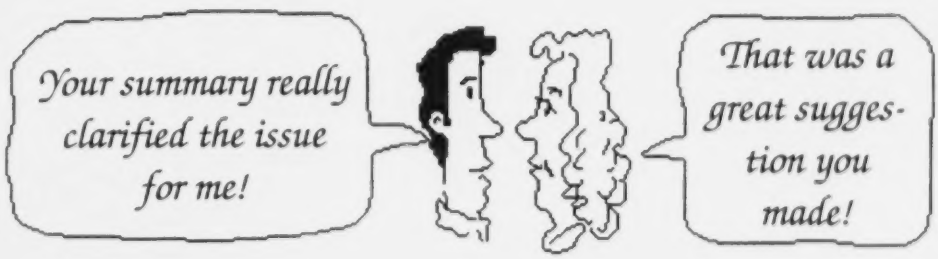
An important behavior within effective groups is providing information to the group, sharing ideas, and answering questions. Every member should be a contributor. Each group member brings a different perspective and different knowledge to the discussion and has a responsibility to share it with the group.

19

Clarify Discussion

Making effective decisions depends on gathering as much information and seeking as many different perspectives as possible. The group member who asks questions and seeks more information on the topic is providing an invaluable service to the group. In addition, when ideas are not expressed clearly, the message should be clarified. A group member may ask for such clarification from the speaker, or the group member may clarify or rephrase him/herself, checking her/his interpretation with the speaker for accuracy. Clarification improves group members' understanding of individual opinions as well as of the issues at hand, and it saves time that might otherwise be lost to confused and unnecessary interaction that is based on misunderstandings.

There also is a need for members to offer occasional summarizing statements to help bring issues into perspective. Summaries allow the group to see a direction to the discussion, to refocus the discussion on the topic, or to test how close to decision the group is.

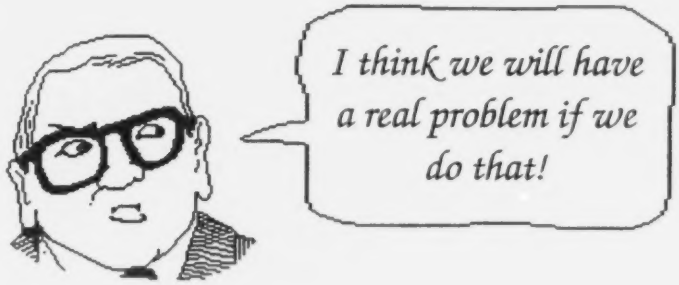


Support Other Group Members

An important aspect of this behavior is to support and express appreciation for other group members' contributions and participation. Expressing appropriate praise, showing an understanding of another member's point of view, or handling controversy in a constructive manner are all ways of providing friendly support. In addition, every member should be sensitive to the emotional atmosphere of the group. One aspect of support is to make positive and constructive changes in the group atmosphere. A reminder of just what needs to be accomplished and what the group has in common may reduce negative feelings.

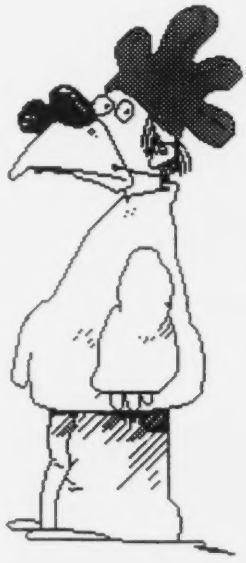
Act As a Catalyst

Group members who ask the hard questions, identify areas of disagreement, or surface confrontations are performing an important group function. Groups that avoid disagreement or confrontation often end up with solutions or strategies for action that are not effective. A group member who acts as a catalyst identifies obstacles and suggests alternatives and is willing to "tell it like it is." When done in the interest of accomplishing the group's goal, this is a valuable behavior. When done to show the member's superiority or to cause trouble, this can be destructive.



Provide Comic Relief

There are times when tension within the group needs to be released. Humor defuses such situations and allows group members to regain a positive perspective. Humor and fun have an important place in all aspects of life and should be a part of the group process. It is actually harmful to the functioning of the group, however, when a member uses humor to call attention to him/herself or is constantly getting the group off task.



21

Using Positive Behavior Cards

It is critical to impress upon group members the importance of the need for developing positive behaviors and everyone participating in the discussion. It is important to provide the group with an opportunity to practice these behaviors in a nonthreatening situation.

There are masters for making sets of Positive Behavior Cards in the Activities Section beginning on page 51. The cards can be printed on colored card stock and laminated. A different colored set of cards should be made for each person in the group.

During group discussion, each member is expected to perform each of the positive behaviors: contribute, support, clarify, and act as catalyst. When the member performs one of the behaviors, he or she places that card in the middle of the table. At the end of the discussion, all the cards from each member should be in the center of the table. Since each member has a set of cards in a different color, the facilitator can make a quick check to ensure that every member had an opportunity to contribute at least four times to the discussion. This is especially effective when used with young people who are working in groups. Both *The Alien Zoo Activity* and *Hijacked in the Desert Activity* (see page 30) are nonthreatening group exercises that allow group members to practice a variety of skills, including handling controversy constructively.

☆ *Rewarding Group Accomplishment*

It is easy to find ways to reward a group. Most group members are delighted with any type of recognition that acknowledges they have done a good job and accomplished their goal. Try the following:

•Certificates of Achievement—

•Community recognition—

•Special celebrations—

•Newspaper articles—

•Paid conference attendance—

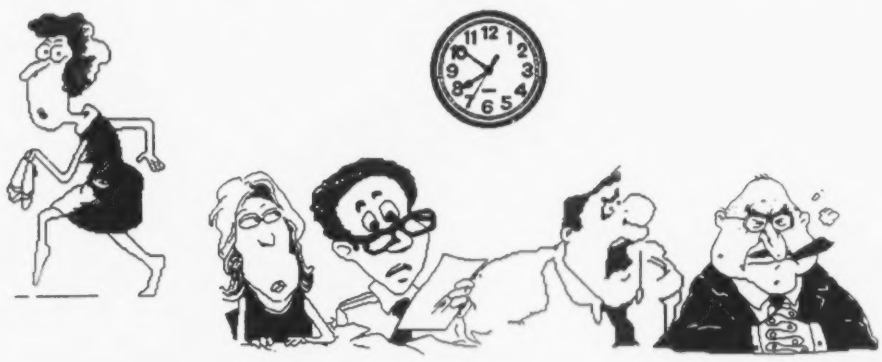
But the biggest reward is knowing—

Handling Controversy Constructively

Controversy arises in every decision-making and problem-solving group. Decisions, by their very nature, are controversial since alternative ideas or solutions are suggested and debated. *Controversy* exists when one person's ideas, information, conclusions, theories, or opinions are incompatible with or different from those of another. Controversy and disagreement are natural, necessary, and potentially creative parts of group interaction. ***The issue is not whether controversy can be prevented, but rather how it can be managed.*** Being able to handle controversy and capitalize on its constructive outcomes is an essential group skill.

It is the failure to handle controversy in constructive ways that leads to the destruction of groups and relationships, not the mere occurrence of conflicts. Controversy that is not openly expressed and constructively resolved will be expressed indirectly at great cost to the group or organization, and the indirect expression of conflict will persist far longer than would open confrontation and settlement.

When handled constructively, controversy can lead to growth and development of the group as well as each individual member.



Have you learned lessons only of those who admired you,
and were tender with you, and stood aside for you?
Have you not learned great lessons from those who braced
themselves against you, and disputed the passage with you?
Walt Whitman, 1860

Guidelines for Constructive Controversy

Many groups perceive a lack of controversy as an indication of agreement, of positive thinking, or good meeting processes. "Niceness" and a desire for harmony, however, can prevent real disagreement from being expressed, leaving it to fester under the surface. When controversy is being suppressed, the disagreement should be surfaced. The facilitator or another group member may act as a catalyst to raise points that may highlight the disagreement, being careful not to create controversy for its own sake. The following guidelines can help group members argue more constructively and transform disagreement among themselves into a positive experience.

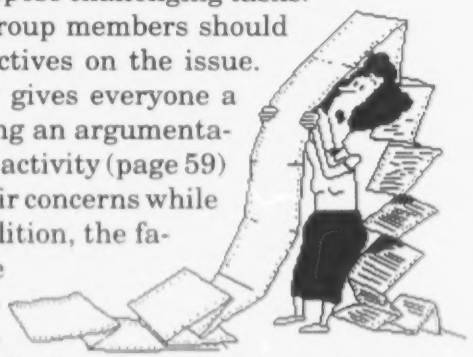
1. ***Agree on Rules:*** Constructive controversy requires that group members agree on acceptable behavior and rules for managing disagreements among members' ideas, information, conclusions, theories, and opinions. (See sample set of rules on page 15.)

2. ***Every Individual Should Be Accorded Respect:*** Everyone's contribution should be valued, respected, and taken seriously. Arguments should concern ideas, not personality traits. When disagreeing with another member, group members should criticize ideas while communicating respect and appreciation for the member as a person.

3. ***Ensure Member Equality:*** The group should balance the situational power of all members. Any inclination by group mem-

bers to tell their boss what he wants to hear or to keep silent rather than openly disagree with a formal leader must be avoided. Contributions need to be evaluated on their soundness, not on the basis of who proposed them. Members who have relevant information and interesting ideas should be listened to, regardless of the amount of formal power they possess. Situational power must be equalized in order for members to feel free to argue strongly for their point of view and position.

4. ***Identify Controversial Issues:*** Controversies often arise when group members highlight contrasting viewpoints, point out disagreements, try to discover inadequacies in proposed solutions and reasoning, or propose challenging tasks. When controversy surfaces, group members should try to discover all the perspectives on the issue. Using a *round robin* strategy gives everyone a chance to speak without fearing an argumentative response. The *Landmines* activity (page 59) allows members to identify their concerns while remaining anonymous. In addition, the facilitator might help people see different perspectives by asking someone to play devil's advocate, or by suggesting that individuals reverse roles and argue the opinions opposite to their own.



5. ***Understand Controversy Behaviors:*** The questionnaire, *Understanding My Responses to Controversy,* identifies the different strategies group members often use in controversial situations. The questionnaire will help surface both desirable and undesirable ways of handling controversy. The questionnaire also provides members with a humorous way of pointing out that someone is being too "aggressive" in one case, or never expressing an opinion in another. The group-score diagram helps illustrate the tendency of the group and may explain why meetings are either going well or always end in arguments. (Master copies of the questionnaire and the scoring sheet are in the Activities Section beginning on page 61.)

Responses to Controversy

Constructive—Seeks to clarify differences between ideas. Contributes information and opinions to the discussion. Seeks best solution to problems.

Aggressive—Cannot tolerate ideas different from own. Views a discussion as a contest of wills or a measure of power. Refuses to compromise.

Supportive—Tries to understand where others are "coming from"—how their experiences have shaped their opinions. Encourages and shows respect for others. Expresses appreciation and interest.

Defensive—Does not readily share opinions and ideas and tries to avoid confrontation. Becomes upset and angry when some disagrees with him or her. Tends to dislike and sometimes insults those who disagree.

Activity

Copy the sheet *Strategies, Behaviors, and Effects on Groups* in the Activities Section on page 73, and hand one out to each group member. Have the individuals in each group complete and score the *Understanding My Responses to Controversy* questionnaire (page 61), tally the group responses, and discuss how people using each of the controversy strategies behave. How does individual behavior affect group performance? To what degree does the group's profile account for the problems or successes the group has had in working together?

How to Tell Whether Controversy Has Been Handled Constructively

There are four things to look for when deciding whether a conflict has been handled constructively or not:

1. if the relationships among group members are stronger, and the members are better able to interact and work with each other;

2. if the group members like and trust each other more;

3. if all the members of the group are satisfied with the results of the conflict; and

4. if the members of the group have improved their ability to resolve future conflicts with one another, the conflict has been handled constructively.

Activity

Have the group participate in *The Hijacked in the Desert Activity* (page 93), *The Alien Zoo Activity* (page 99), or an actual group problem-solving or decision-making task. Then have group members complete the *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire* in the Activities Section (page 67). Use the results to discuss how well (or how badly) the group handles controversy and what would improve the group's effectiveness.

Making Effective Decisions

There are a number of group problem-solving and decision-making strategies; eight of these are included in the Activities Section beginning on page 75. *Jigsaw* is useful when a great deal of information is needed for the group to make an informed decision. *Brainstorming* generates a large number of ideas and stimulates the thinking of the group. The *Nominal Group Process* helps identify priorities using a more structured approach to brainstorming. *Sift and Sort* is a strategy for generating ideas and categorizing them. *Force-Field Analysis* helps the group identify the pros and cons—the helping forces and constraining forces—that must be considered when identifying possible alternative solutions. *Consensus Decision Making* is ideal for discussing those alternatives and identifying the criteria important in choosing a course of action. *Choosing Alternatives* helps clarify the strengths of each alternate course of action and focuses the discussion on the important criteria for decisions.

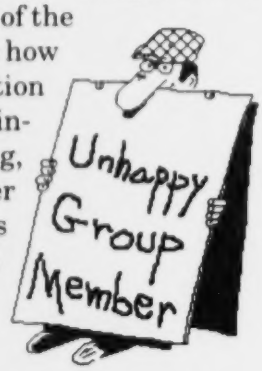
Characteristics of Effective Decisions

- The decisions are of high-quality—they address the problem, are workable, and have widespread support.
- The abilities of group members were fully utilized.
- Group time and resources were used efficiently.
- Group members are committed to implementing the decision.
- The problem-solving ability of the group has improved.
- Group cohesiveness has increased.

29

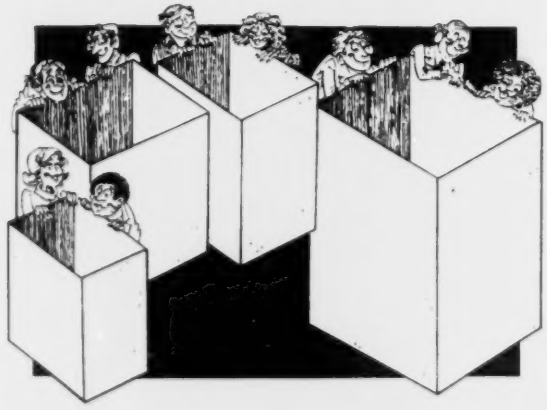
Improving Group Effectiveness

The most effective way to determine whether or not a cooperative goal structure is being maintained or if controversy is being handled constructively is to periodically test the climate of the group. There are a number of ways to determine how well a group is functioning. Three group reaction forms are included in the Activities Section beginning on page 121. The most important thing, however, is the discussion that takes place after the group members have indicated their feelings toward the group. It is up to the group to take steps to solve any personality, trust, or communication problems.



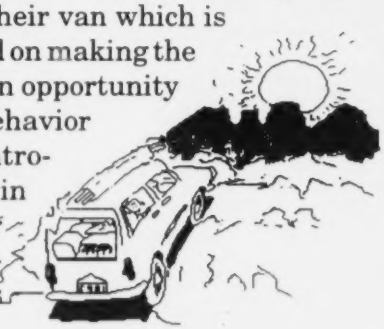
A fantastic facilitator uses the various activities and strategies found in this book and elsewhere to ensure the group develops a cooperative goal structure, handles controversy constructively, makes high-quality decisions, and is dedicated to improving its functioning.

Good Luck!



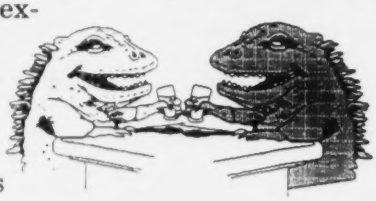
Hijacked in the Desert Activity

A challenging group decision-making activity is *Hijacked in the Desert* beginning on page 93 in the Activities Section. The group must decide what items to choose from their van which is being hijacked. Their survival will depend on making the right choice. This activity also provides an opportunity for group members to learn positive behavior skills, explore the ways they handle controversy, and practice dealing with problems in group process. The activity is designed for teams of five members; it will work, however, with teams as small as three or as large as seven.



Alien Zoo Activity

Another fun way to practice the behaviors and processes discussed in this book is the Alien Zoo Activity beginning on page 99. This provides a nonthreatening activity during which group members can learn positive behavior skills, explore the ways the group handles controversy, and practice dealing with the problems in group process that surface. The activity is designed for teams of five members; it will work, however, with teams as small as three or as large as seven.



The objectives for the *Hijacked in the Desert Activity* and the *Alien Zoo Activity* include the following:

1. to practice (a) making group rules, (b) using positive group behaviors, and (c) monitoring group processes;
2. to provide a safe activity for exploring controversy behavior;
3. to demonstrate that each member has knowledge needed to complete the task effectively; and
4. to illustrate that effective group problem solving ensures everyone's perspective is included in the discussion, is respected, and considered.

31

Resources

Avery, M., Auvine, B., Streibel, B., & Weiss, L. (1981). *Building united judgment: A handbook for consensus decision making.* Madison, WI: The Center for Conflict Resolution.

Johnson, D. W. & Johnson, F. P. (1982). *Joining together: Group theory and group skills.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Napier, R. W., & Gershenfeld, M. K. (1981). *Groups: Theory and experience.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

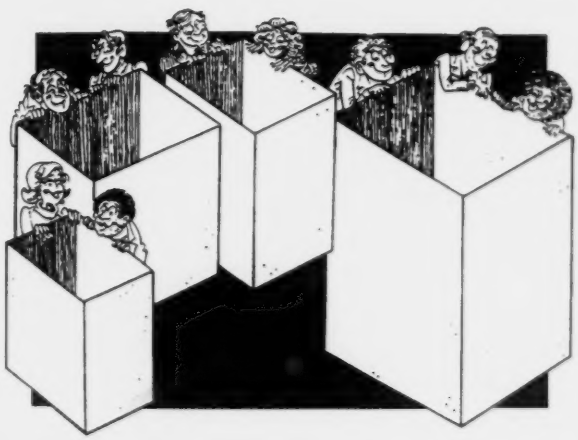
Rohnke, K. (1991). *Bottomless baggie.* Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing.

Scearce, C. (1992). *100 ways to build teams.* Palatine, IL: Skylight

Williams, A. B. (1993). *More than 50 ways to build team consensus.* Palatine, IL: Skylight.

Activities Section

Team-Building Activities
Personality Orientation Checklist
Positive Behavior Cards
Handling Controversy
Group Decision-Making Processes
Hijacked in the Desert Activity
Alien Zoo Activity
Assessing Group Effectiveness



Notice

The activities in this section are designed to be copied and used in staff development activities. Please credit the National Dropout Prevention Center, College of Health, Education, and Human Development, Clemson University, when you use them.

Team-Building Activities

Questions to Answer

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is for group members to get to know one another better and to set the stage for whatever the group is doing that day. The question chosen for group members to answer should in some way *relate to the task* of the group or workshop topic or provide a team with a better understanding of other team members' perspectives.

Materials: The question written on chart paper, an overhead projector transparency, or a chalk board.

Time: Approximately 20 minutes.

Facilitator Instructions: Choose *any one* of the following questions or develop your own. Set a time limit of 10 minutes for the activity. Have participants answer the questions and share their answer with the entire group. If the group is a large one, divide the participants into groups of five and have them share within their small group. Make sure to plan approximately one minute for small group to share with the large group (e.g., if you have five small groups, allot five minutes for this closing activity). Each small group can choose the most unusual, most surprising, or most interesting answer and share it (emphasize sharing *only* one) with the entire large group.

1. What event had the most influence in shaping your professional philosophy?
2. What was something good that happened to you this past week?
3. What exciting event are you looking forward to?
4. If you had to describe your strengths using only three words, what would they be?
5. What frustrates you most about your job?
6. What are three of the best things that have happened in your life?
7. In one sentence, what advice would you offer a new staff member?

Frozen in Space

Purpose: To provide a fun way for members of small groups (no more than 7 members) to "brag" and get to know each other's strengths.

Materials: A overhead projector transparency or individual instruction sheets with the situation and group member instructions; three by five index cards for writing applications.

Time: Allow five minutes for the members to write their paragraphs and 10 to 15 minutes for the group to read and guess who wrote which one.

****

Situation: Earth is going to be destroyed in a collision with a comet. The Human Interspace Species Survivor (HISS) program is taking applications for travel to colonize another planet in our galaxy. Those chosen will make the trip in cryogenic tanks so they will not age.

Group Member Instructions: Write no more than three sentences describing your accomplishments and the contributions you could make to this new colony. Do not write your name on the card. Place your application face down in the center of the table.

****

Facilitator Instructions: The applications should be shuffled and each group member should take one (not his or her own) to read aloud to the group. After all the applications have been read, the group tries to identify the author of each.

Don't Be Greedy

Purpose: For group members to learn more about each other and develop trust.

Materials: A roll of toilet paper ***or*** a box of tissue ***or*** a bag of M & Ms for each group.

Time: Approximately 20 minutes

Facilitator Instructions: Instruct each individual to take as many of the items (squares of toilet paper, tissues, or M & Ms) that they feel they will need. Do not tell them ***for what!*** After everyone has taken "what they need," tell them to share with the group one piece of information about themselves for each item they took (e.g., if they took 20 M & Ms, they must share 20 pieces of information about themselves).

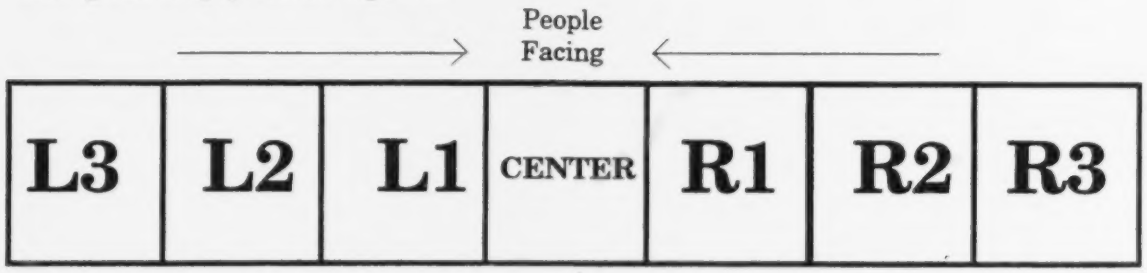
Changing Places

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to foster team work, cooperative planning, and group cohesiveness.

Materials: Wide masking tape or seven, 12" or larger carpet squares (you can get these at carpet stores free or for a nominal cost).

Time: Approximately 20 minutes—10 minutes for the activity; 10 minutes for debriefing.

Facilitator Instructions: Mark off seven, 24" squares in a row using the masking tape or place the carpet squares at comfortable distances for human bodies. Divide a large group into teams of six people. Three people stand in the three squares to the left—facing the empty center square; three people stand in the squares to the right—facing the empty center square.



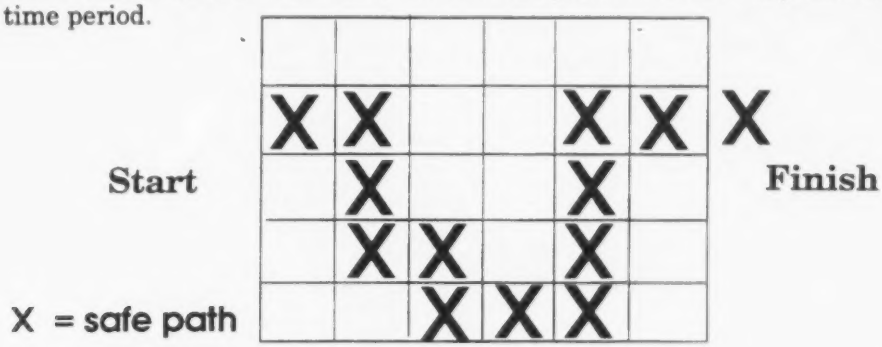
The **objective** is for the three people who are on the right and the three who are on the left to exchange places. The **rules** are: (1) you must continue to face in the direction you begin with, (2) you may step into an empty space directly in front of you, (3) you may move around a person directly facing you if there is an empty space immediately behind that person, (4) you may ***never*** move backwards. If the team makes a mistake or reaches an impasse, everyone on the team goes back to their original places, and the team starts over.

Debriefing: Discuss the importance of planning, cooperative action, and working together as a team. Did the team take time to plan before starting? Did anyone make a move without gaining group consensus? Was everyone's perspective respected and considered or did one or two people dominate the decision making? How could the team improve its performance?

Solution: The sequence of moves is as follows—L1, R1, R2, L1, L2, L3, R1, R2, R3, L1, L2, L3, R1, R2, R3, L2, L3

Mine Field

Purpose: The objective of Mine Field is to build teamwork by impressing upon group members the importance of group planning and cooperation in solving a problem. Prior planning is an important ingredient in accomplishing this task. In addition, members must cooperate and help other members cross the mine field. Teams that depend on luck rarely succeed within the allotted time period.



Materials: Several rolls of wide masking tape (or chalk or heavy twine and stakes for outside use); a horn, clacker, or just your own sound-making device (your mouth); copies of the *Mine Field Grid.*

Time: Approximately 20 minutes

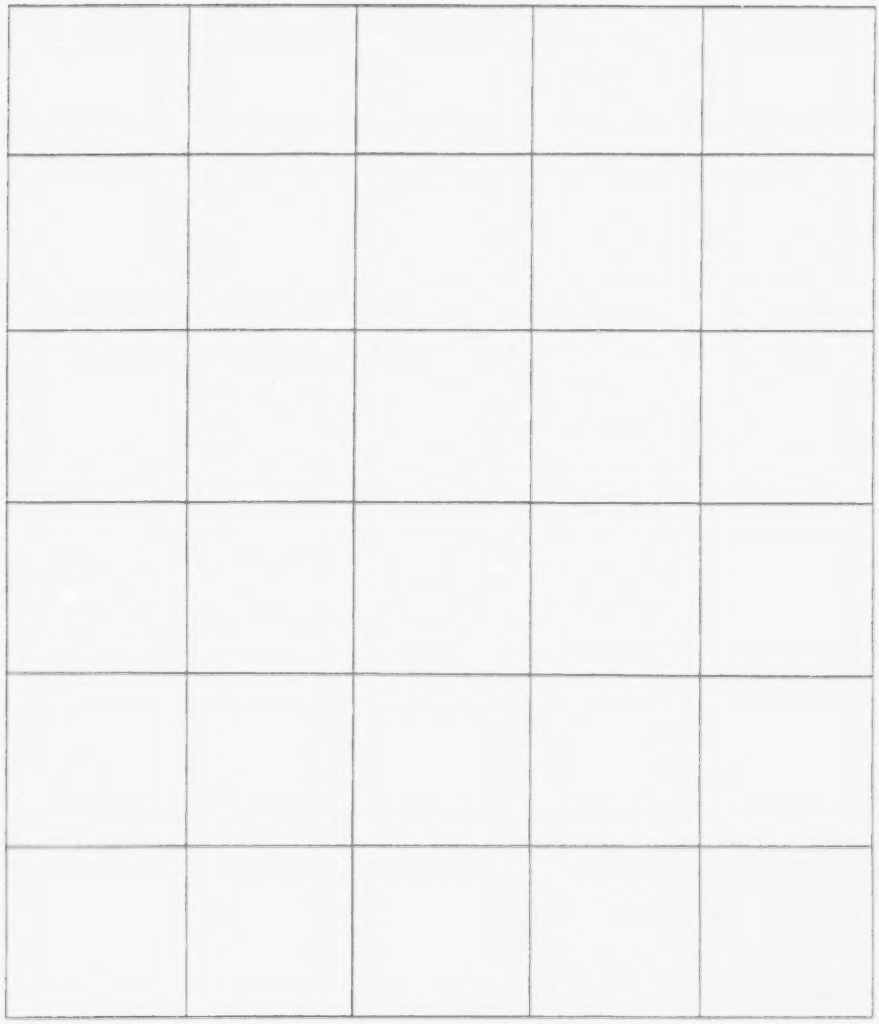
Facilitator Instructions: Mine Field can be used either indoors or outdoors. If used indoors, wide masking tape can be used on the floor or carpet to mark off 30, 12" squares—squares big enough for both an adult's feet to stand in. If used outside, stakes and twine on the ground or chalk on concrete can be used to mark out the squares. Both inside and outside, masking tape can be used to mark squares on a tarpaulin which is then spread on the floor or ground.

Using the *Mine Field Grid*, mark a pattern of Xs (your choice) to indicate the **safe path** through the mine field. The goal of the group is to move all the members across the mine field by discovering a safe path within 12 minutes. The group members may not walk around the mine field, they all must cross the area marked into squares. They may move forward or left or right; they may not move at a diagonal.

The group does not know which are the safe squares. ***They do not see the chart of the mine field. They must learn by trial and error.*** The group is given two minutes to plan how they will accomplish the task, then the first person starts across the mine field. If that person steps on an unmarked square (a mine!), the facilitator blows a horn, makes a noise, or bangs two blocks together. Everyone who is on the field at that time must retrace the safe path backward (using only those squares that have proven safe). If a person makes a mistake in retracing the safe path and steps on a square that does not have an X, they reduce the time allotted to the team by 30 seconds. If two or more teams are engaging in this activity simultaneously, the team which gets all its members across the mine field first can be declared the winner.

Be sure to debrief the team members: How did planning help them achieve their goal? How important was it to listen to and consider the effectiveness of different perspectives? How important was cooperation?

Finish



Start

Mine Field Grid

Personality Orientation

Personality Orientation

Purpose: The *Personality Orientation* activity will help everyone to better understand the people they work with, the personality basis for different perspectives, and the need to learn how to communicate with people who have different personality orientations.

Materials: Copies of the *Personality Orientation Scale*; a set of red, green, blue, and gold/yellow marking pens for each group; a sufficient quantity of plastic Derby Hats ***or*** hats made from colored construction paper ***or*** colored visors (Results Oriented—gold/yellow, Action Oriented—red, Problem Oriented—green, and People Oriented—blue). In the helping professions, it is not unusual for half of the group to be People Oriented. Groups of administrators tend to have more Results Oriented and Problem Oriented than any other orientation.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes to explain and have participants complete the *Personality Orientation Scale* and an additional 15 minutes for ***each*** activity.

Facilitator Instructions: The *Personality Orientation Scale* master should be copied and handed out to participants. Each participant completes this. On the back of the checklist is an explanation of the various orientations. The instructions suggest participants use colored markers to draw circles on their name tags corresponding with the results of the checklist. The *most dominant* orientation color (the one with the most points) should have the largest circle, followed by the next strongest orientation with a circle sized to indicate the appropriate relationship, etc.. The *least dominant* orientation color will have the smallest circle. In cases where the personality orientation strengths are roughly equal, the circles should be drawn the same approximate size as illustrated on the back of the checklist.

Activity One: Once participants have identified their predominant personality orientation color, they should take a hat of that color and form a group with others who have the same predominant orientation. In their same-orientation groups, ask each group to write a memo *that will appeal to others with that personality orientation*. Choose a memo topic for all four groups to use such as "announce the place and purpose of the next staff meeting."

Activity Two: If time permits, a second activity can be used to illustrate how difficult it is to complete a task when trying to communicate using the *least dominant* orientation. Participants exchange the hat indicating their predominant personality orientation for a hat the color of their *least dominant orientation*. The participants form into new groups with others who share their *least dominant orientation* and try to write a memo that appeals to others who actually have that orientation An appropriate memo topic might be "convince management with this orientation that each staff member's choice of flexible working hours should be instituted in your organization."

Debriefing: Discussion of the activities should include (1) how participants felt when working with others who communicated in the same way they did, and (2) how participants felt when trying to think and use a communication style that they were not particularly comfortable with.

Personality Orientation Scale
What Am I Like at Work?

STEP 1: *Using the four-point scale below, rate the four descriptions* ***across each numbered row*** *according to which is your strongest characteristic most of the time at* ***work*** *(4), your next strongest (3), etc.* ***Each box will have a number in it****— 1, 2, 3, or 4.*

4 = strongest 3 = next strongest 2 = third strongest 1 = least strong

Sample	3	value facts	1	value fantasies	4	value concepts	2	value memories
1.		like respect		like attention		like recognition		like approval
2.		like making decisions		like excitement		like reasoning		like interaction
3.		am responsible		am unconventional		am logical		am friendly
4.		am accountable		am impulsive		am innovative		am caring
5.		seek purpose		seek adventure		seek knowledge		seek harmony
6.		am organized		am spontaneous		am critical		am sympathetic
7.		seek power		seek freedom		seek improvement		seek togetherness
8.		seek results		seek novelty		seek alternatives		seek acceptance
9.		am a planner		am a risk taker		am a problem solver		am a team player
10.		like structure		like change		like innovation		like stability
11.		value enterprize		value challenges		value insight		value friends
12.		work around difficulties		thrive on crisis		anticipate outcomes		pitch in to help others

STEP 2: *Count the total points down each* ***column*** *and place in the boxes below.*

STEP 3: *Fold on the dashed line and turn to back of page.*

42

43

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Personality Orientation

Most measures of personality types or traits are based on the assumption that individuals tend to behave in fairly consistent ways in similar situations. Neilson and Thoelke refer to "clusters" of behaviors in *Winning Colors*. Gregorc proposes that individuals "mediate" their environment in ways determined by how they perceive and order information. Even the more complicated measures (Meyers/Briggs Type Indicator or Keirsey's instrument) reflect an individual's customary response to environmental stimuli. The Personality Orientation is designed to accomplish the following:

- to provide an easy way to identify four, fairly distinct groups of associated behaviors;
- to illustrate that while individuals may display a predominant personality orientation, every individual exhibits behavior from all four groups;
- to demonstrate that while individuals with different personality orientations may perceive and react to the environment in different ways, each orientation has its strengths to contribute to any task; and
- to illustrate that when communicatingwith individuals with other personality orientations, you must "speak their language."

Results Oriented (Gold)	**Action Oriented (Red)**	**Problem Oriented (Green)**	**People Oriented (Blue)**
Gets the task done	Has high level of en-	Checks facts	Works well with others
Keeps to a schedule	ergy	Questions out-	Considers people first
Watches budget	Keeps everyone moving	comes	Is helpful
	Introduces novel ideas	Seeks alternatives	

The box with the highest total is your strongest Personality Orientation.

STEP 4:

Draw and color circles on your name tag to show your Personality Orientation.

EXAMPLE: *Using the colored markers (Gold, Red, Green, and Blue), draw circles in sizes and with the colors that best illustrate the distribution of points on the Personality Orientation Rating Scale. For example, if your distribution of scores was something like this,*

24	12	36	48
Results Gold	**Action** Red	**Problem** Green	**People** Blue

you would draw circles and color them like these.

Blue Green Gold Red

Or if your distribution of scores was something like this,

36	12	36	36
Results Gold	**Action** Red	**Problem** Green	**People** Blue

you would draw circles and color them like these.

Blue Green Gold Red

Put on a New Hat

People

Let's get to know each other.
Will the participants be comfortable?
Let's work in teams.

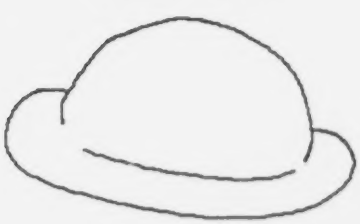
Results

Who's responsible for this?
What is the timeline?
How much will it cost?

Problem

What does the research say?
How will this affect us?
What else might work?

Action



Let's do something different!
Let's do it now!
Let's make it fun.

Positive Behavior Cards

CONTRIBUTE

CLARIFY

PROVIDE SUPPORT

48

CATALYST

43

Ask others for facts, opinions, ideas, feelings, and information that are relevant to the discussion. Ask for clarification of ideas that are not clear. Rephrase opinions of others in your own words to clarify.

Identify areas of disagreement, point out problems, or ask for examples. Ask others to give rationale for their positions.

Offer facts, opinions, ideas, feelings, and information that are relevant to the discussion. Summarize discussion -- pull together related ideas or suggestions and restate them.

Encourage participation by being friendly toward others. Acknowledge other members' contributions by expressing appreciation when appropriate.

Handling Controversy

Landmines: Surfacing Problems

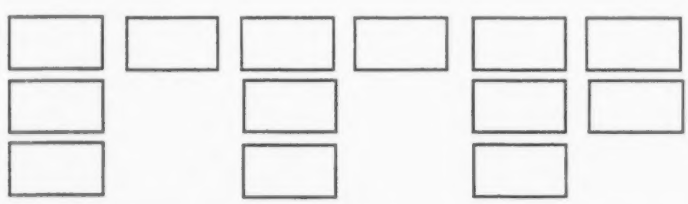
Purpose: *Landmines* is a strategy for surfacing problems or controversial issues. Minefields are plots of land where explosive landmines are buried. Knowing that an area contains these mines, few people are willing to cross such a field. Avoiding whole areas where there are landmines leaves the real, explosive issues safely buried. If a group is sincere in its efforts to improve the group's or organization's functioning, the buried issues and problems must surface or they will effectively neutralize any actions for improvement. Unless the *real* problems are brought to the surface and addressed, a school will focus its efforts on superficial, cosmetic changes that, in the long run, are worthless.

Materials: Enough 3 x 5 cards so that each member has at least three for problem identification. Pencils, markers, or pens that are all alike so that members are using the same kind (no one should be able to identify the author of a card by the color of ink, etc., used). Masking tape to post the cards on the wall. Chart paper to summarize the problems that surface and to develop plans to address the problems.

Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

Instructions:

- Each member of the group writes three or more landmines (problems or difficulties or issues)—one per card—that he or she feels are the *real* difficulties facing the group or organization.
- The cards are placed written-side down on the table, gathered together and shuffled or mixed up, then handed out to the group members to post.
- Group members, one at a time, post the cards they were handed on the wall (using the masking tape). As the members post the cards, they read the cards posted previously and decide if any of their cards contain the same issue or problem. If so, the card is posted in a column, horizontally, below the cards identifying the same problem.



- When all the cards are posted, the facilitator reads the cards in each column and asks the group to summarize the problem identified in the column of cards. This summary is written on the chart paper and labeled Problem #1, Problem #2, etc.
- The group should discuss and use the rating technique in the *Nominal Group Process* to select the most pressing problems.

Understanding My Response to Controversy

Each of the following statements describes a behavior during a controversy. For each statement put a 5 if you *almost always* behave that way, 4 if you *frequently* behave that way, 3 if you *occasionally* behave that way, 2 if you *seldom* behave that way, and 1 if you *almost never* behave that way.

1. ____ I don't like arguments because when someone disagrees with me, I feel personally rejected.
2. ____ When I am involved in an argument, I restate and summarize the opposing positions.
3. ____ I can still respect someone as a person while I disagree with his or her ideas.
4. ____ I know I'm right, so I don't listen to other points of view.
5. ____ Whenever someone disagrees with my ideas, I get upset and angry.
6. ____ When I win an argument, I see those who disagreed with me as losers.
7. ____ When there is a disagreement, I keep in mind that the group is trying to make the best decision.
8. ____ If I think someone is going to disagree with me, I keep my ideas and opinions to myself.
9. ____ When there is a disagreement, I encourage others to express their ideas and opinions fully.
10. ____ During an argument, I try to make my point by talking more than anyone else.
11. ____ I grumble sarcastic comments about someone who criticizes my ideas and opinions.
12. ____ I can disagree with another person and still appreciate them and be interested in their ideas.
13. ____ When someone disagrees with me, I try to clarify the areas of disagreement.
14. ____ Even when I don't like others' ideas and opinions, I let them know that I like them as persons.
15. ____ I try to understand the experiences and frame of reference of someone who disagrees with me.
16. ____ When people disagree with me, I try to discredit their ideas.
17. ____ When others disagree with me, I stay very quiet and try to avoid them in the future.
18. ____ When someone disagrees with me, I feel it is important to convince them I am right and they are wrong.
19. ____ Even though I may disagree with people, I will congratulate them when they present a well-thought-out argument.
20. ____ When there is a disagreement, I try to find a workable compromise that accommodates most of the group's ideas and information.

After you have completed all 20 questions, at the dashed line, fold to the back the question numbers and answers.

Scoring on the back. ☞

Scoring: Write your score for each statement in the space provided and total your score for each strategy. The higher the total score for each strategy, the more frequently you tend to use that strategy.

Aggressive	Contributes	Defensive	Supports
		1.____	
	2.____		
			3.____
4.____			
		5.____	
6.____			
	7.____		
		8.____	
			9.____
10.____			
		11.____	
			12.____
	13.____		
			14.____
	15.____		
16.____			
		17.____	
18.____			
			19.____
	20.____		
Totals ____	____	____	____

What strategies did you score highest on? How would you describe your contribution to handling group controversy?

Group Responses to Controversy

Instructions: List the strategy scores for each group member in the appropriate columns. Total the scores for each strategy and divide by the number of members in the group. Plot the group scores for each strategy on the lines of the graph by coloring in the circle opposite the score for that strategy. Connect the circles with straight lines. If your group plot is more vertical than horizontal, your group should work well in handling controversy. If your group plot is more horizontal than vertical, there will be problems in handling controversy.

List Individual Member Totals

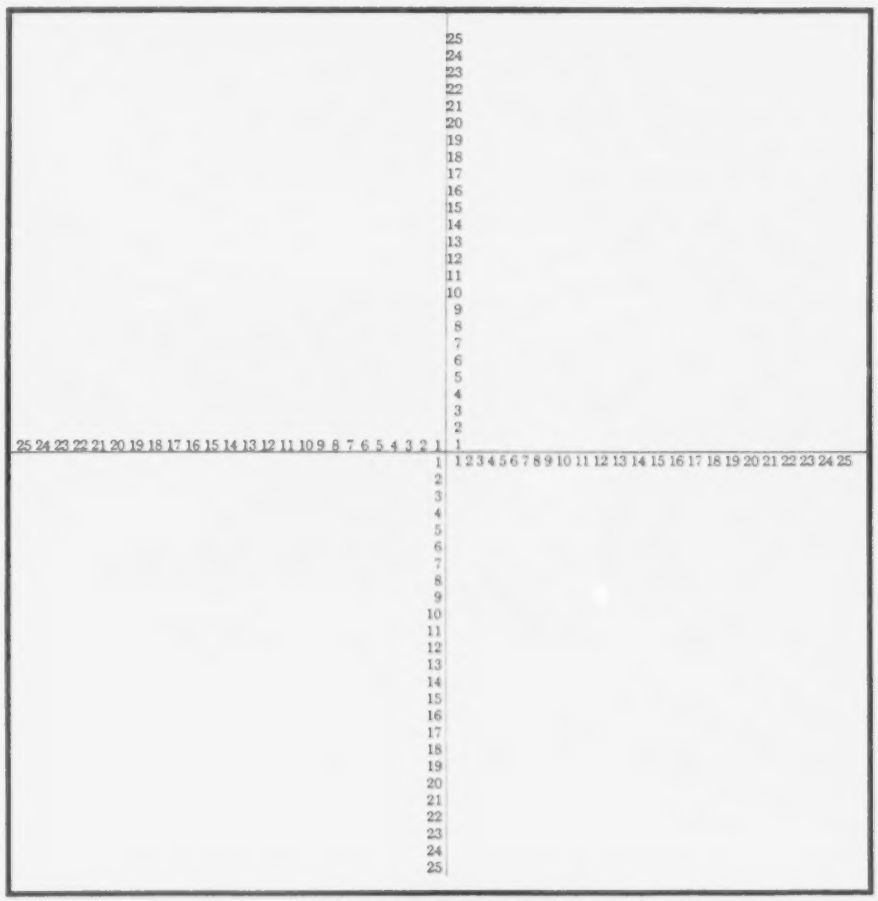
Aggressive	Contributes	Defensive	Supports
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
Totals	_____		
Divided by number of group members =			
Group Score _____	_____	_____	_____

Handles controversy

May have problems

CONTRIBUTES

DEFENSIVE



AGGRESSIVE

SUPPORTS

Effects of Controversy Questionnaire

INSTRUCTIONS: Check if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Statement	Agree	Disagree
1. I don't trust some of the group members.		
2. I would rather not work with some members of this group.		
3. I don't think people should have to change the way they behave just for a group.		
4. I feel I understand the members of this group better.		
5. I have feelings of resentment about the discussion.		
6. I trust the members of this group more than I did before.		
7. I am happy about working with the members of this group.		
8. I don't understand some members of this group.		
9. I think the group handled the controversy very well.		
10. I don't like some of the group members.		
11. I can see how certain behaviors can help resolve a conflict.		
12. I am satisfied with the results of our discussion.		
13. I feel friendly towards the members of this group.		
14. I don't think the group has resolved the controversy.		
15. I understand that some behaviors just make a conflict worse.		
16. I think controversy should be avoided.		

Effects of Controversy Questionnaire

Constructive/Not Constructive Responses

	Constructive		Not Constructive	
	A	D	A	D
1. I don't trust some of the group members.		X	X	
2. I would rather not work with some members of this group.		X	X	
3. I don't think people should have to change the way they behave just for a group.		X	X	
4. I feel I understand the members of this group better.	X			X
5. I have feelings of resentment about the discussion.		X	X	
6. I trust the members of this group more than I did before.	X			X
7. I am happy about working with the members of this group.	X			X
8. I don't understand some members of this group.		X	X	
9. I think the group handled the controversy very well.	X			X
10. I don't like some of the group members.		X	X	
11. I can see how certain behaviors can help resolve a conflict.	X			X
12. I am satisfied with the results of our discussion.	X			X
13. I feel friendly towards the members of this group.	X			X
14. I don't think the group has resolved the controversy.		X	X	
15. I understand that some behaviors just make a conflict worse.	X			X
16. I think controversy should be avoided.		X	X	
TOTAL				

INSTRUCTIONS: Record the number of group members that answered ***agree*** or ***disagree*** for each question on the Group Tally Sheet. This can be done by having the members hold their hands up as the facilitator calls out the question number and says "agree," then says "disagree." The tally can be made in a way that ensures more privacy for members by placing a copy of the Tally Sheet on the wall or flip chart. Each member then places a mark in the appropriate column to record whether he or she agreed or disagreed with each statement. Total the number of *constructive* responses and the number of *not constructive* responses. This will provide the group with a measure of how well it handled the controversy. The results can also serve as a discussion tool for ***why*** the controversy was handled well or not and what the group needs to do to improve the way it handles controversy in the future.

Effects of Controversy Questionnaire
Group Tally Sheet

		Agree	Disagree
1.	I don't trust some of the group members.		
2.	I would rather not work with some members of this group.		
3.	I don't think people should have to change the way they behave just for a group.		
4.	I feel I understand the members of this group better.		
5.	I have feelings of resentment about the discussion.		
6.	I trust the members of this group more than I did before.		
7.	I am happy about working with the members of this group.		
8.	I don't understand some members of this group.		
9.	I think the group handled the controversy very well.		
10.	I don't like some of the group members.		
11.	I can see how certain behaviors can help resolve a conflict.		
12.	I am satisfied with the results of our discussion.		
13.	I feel friendly towards the members of this group.		
14.	I don't think the group has resolved the controversy.		
15.	I understand that some behaviors just make a conflict worse.		
16.	I think controversy should be avoided.		
	TOTAL		

Strategies, Behaviors, and Effects on Group

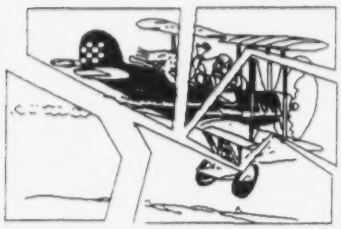
Strategies		Observable Behaviors	Effects on Group
POSITIVE STRATEGIES	Contributes	• answers questions • shares information/ideas • offers alternatives	• stimulates discussion • helps group make informed decisions • moves group towards goal • makes group more productive
	Clarifies	• asks for information • asks questions • tries to clarify what others are saying • summarizes	• increases effectiveness of decision • ensures discussion is understood • focuses on group task • makes group more productive
	Supports	• praises what others are doing and saying • expresses concern about others • gives "friendly" answers • draws out "quiet" group members • intent listener	• decreases tension • produces harmony • creates positive feeling • encourages participation • increases understanding of others
(SITUATIONAL)	Acts as Catalyst	• asks difficult questions • asks for references/examples • identifies obstacles or offers counter-statements • identifies areas of disagreement	• surfaces controversy • identifies weaknesses of arguments or proposed solutions • helps develop effective decisions • can make group members uneasy
	Provides Comic Relief	• makes jokes • makes humorous comments • clowns around	• relieves tension • can enliven things • can be distracting • can hide a real group problem
NEGATIVE STRATEGIES	Is Aggressive	• ignores others' comments • monopolizes discussion • interrupts • starts arguments • tries to limit discussion to own ideas	• may intimidate others • may make others withdraw or become passive • frustrates others who want to talk • discourages facilitators • slows accomplishment of tasks
	Is Defensive	• avoids answering questions • does not help with work • makes sarcastic remarks • does non-related activities • talks about irrelevant topics	• distracts others • breaks continuity • frustrates task-oriented members • gets group off task • introduces personalities into discussion

Group Decision-Making Processes

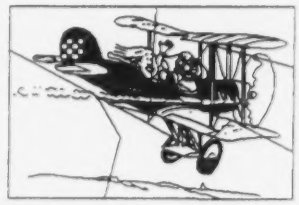
Decision Making Strategies

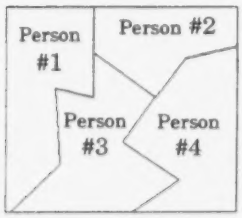
Purpose: There are numerous group problem-solving and decision-making strategies; eight of these are included in this section. The Jigsaw is useful when there is a great deal of information needed in order for the group to make an informed decision. *Brainstorming* generates a large number of ideas and stimulates the thinking of the group. The *Nominal Group Process* helps the group identify priorities using a more structured approach to brainstorming. *Sift and Sort* is a strategy for generating ideas and categorizing them. *Force-Field Analysis* helps the group identify the pros and cons—the helping forces and constraining forces—that must be considered when identifying possible alternative solutions. *Consensus Decision Making* is ideal for discussing those alternatives and identifying the criteria important in choosing a course of action. *Choosing Alternatives* helps clarify the strengths of each alternate course of action and focuses the discussion on the important criteria for decisions. The *Action Plan Form* is included to show how decisions, once made, might be systematically carried out.

Jigsaw



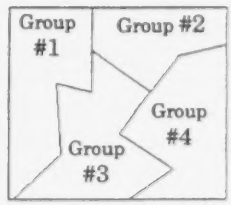
This activity allows a group member to become the expert. A body of content (information) is divided into a number of logical parts. Each member (or group) is given one of the parts to read, study, and prepare to inform others. When all the information parts are assembled (presented to everyone by everyone), the whole content picture becomes visible, like a jigsaw puzzle when it is put together.





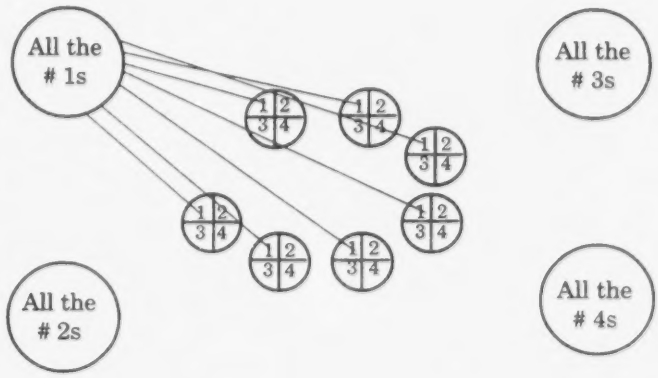
The Jigsaw process varies:

Individual Jigsaw—Each individual is responsible for that part of the information which has been assigned. The individual reads, identifies the important points, and develops a plan to share that information with others. The whole group discusses the implications or meaning of the complete body of information.



Small Groups Jigsaw—When there are more people than there are parts of information, groups of individuals may work together on a single assigned part of the information while other groups work on other parts. The members of each group read their assigned information, discuss which points are important, and develop a plan to share their knowledge with all the others. The whole participant group discusses the implications or meaning of the complete body of information.

Numbered Groups Jigsaw—This format can be used in large group settings (divide the large group into cooperative groups of three to five members). In each cooperative group, each member is given a number (1 to 5). Every Member #1 in each group gets the same reading assignment, each Member #2 is given another reading assignment, and so forth. The cooperative groups break up and all #1s join together, all #2s join together, etc. In the numbered groups, the members read the assigned information, discuss the main points, and plan how to share the information with their cooperative group. Everyone then returns to their cooperative groups to share the information. In this format, there is no general sharing with the whole participant body, only with one's own cooperative group. The cooperative groups discuss the implications or meaning of the complete body of information. The whole participant body may then use the Nominal Group Process to identify priorities to be addressed.



Main Features of Jigsaw

1. Information content is divided into logical subsets.
2. Each subset of information is assigned to an individual or group of individuals.
3. The information is read and analyzed.
4. A plan for teaching/sharing with others is developed.
5. The information is shared with others.
6. The implications of the whole body of information are discussed.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an unstructured method for generating a great many ideas. An idea suggested by one member of the group may trigger new ideas from the other members. A critical aspect of brainstorming is to accept any and every idea that members think of. Sometimes the wildest ideas prod us into looking at a problem or a task from a different perspective; they shift our thinking to new ways of doing something.

Steps:

1. The group should choose a facilitator and a recorder.

2. The group should identify the problem, task, or question to be addressed by the brainstorming. The recorder should write it on chart paper, an overhead projector transparency, or a chalk board.

3. Group members should take a couple of minutes to think about the task and write down *short* phrases to describe their ideas.

4. The facilitator calls on group members *one at a time*. Each member presents ***one*** idea, and the recorder writes it on chart paper, an overhead projector transparency, or a chalk board. The facilitator continues calling on the group members one at a time for one idea until all the ideas have been recorded.

Purpose: The purpose of Brainstorming is

- to ensure that everyone's ideas are accorded respect and acceptance,
- to generate a great many different ideas, and
- to generate ideas that shift the paradigm for accomplishing tasks or solving problems.

Nominal Group Process

TO BEGIN: Clarify what the group is going to discuss. Write a task or problem statement. If the group has more than 10 members, divide into smaller groups of five to seven. Next, each small group chooses a leader (responsible for calling on members to respond), a time keeper (responsible for calling time), a reporter (who records and reports group's decisions), and a Keeper of the Rules.

STEPS:

1. Read the task statement.

2. Each individual *silently* writes down her/his ideas *clearly and briefly*.

3. The leader calls on each individual—one at a time—to share *just one* idea. The reporter numbers and writes each idea on newsprint. This continues until each group member has shared all his/her ideas.

RULE: Do *NOT* discuss or explain ideas at this time. Simply record each one without comment (approval or disapproval) from other group members. It is the process observer's responsibility to enforce this rule.

4. Clarification and Discussion—At this time, group members should discuss the ideas—ask for clarification, explain, dispute, or defend.

5. Voting—Each member of the group gets five votes and can choose five of the ideas he or she likes best as the reporter reads them out. An alternative method is for each member to have a different colored marking pen (or colored round dots) with which to mark five choices on the newsprint.

6. The reporter tallies the votes for each idea, totals them (those with the *highest* totals are the most important to consider), lists the top-rated five on newsprint, and tapes it to the wall.

7. Each small group presents its top five ideas to the whole group, giving *brief* explanations.

8. The whole group then discusses the top-rated ideas from each group—pros and cons, strengths and weaknesses, etc.

9. To select the five most important, participants again vote for each of the ideas.

10. The votes of all participants are tallied and the ideas with the *highest* totals are those chosen for further action.

Sift and Sort

Purpose:

This process is especially useful when working with a large group of people such as a school faculty or an agency staff. The purpose is to gain agreement among a fairly large number of people on how to accomplish a task or solve a problem. Using this strategy provides closure to the products of *Brainstorming* or the *Nominal Group Process*. When there are more than seven or eight people in a decision-making group, it is almost impossible for everyone to have input or to arrive at a decision to which everyone is committed. *Sift and Sort* is one way of achieving these outcomes.

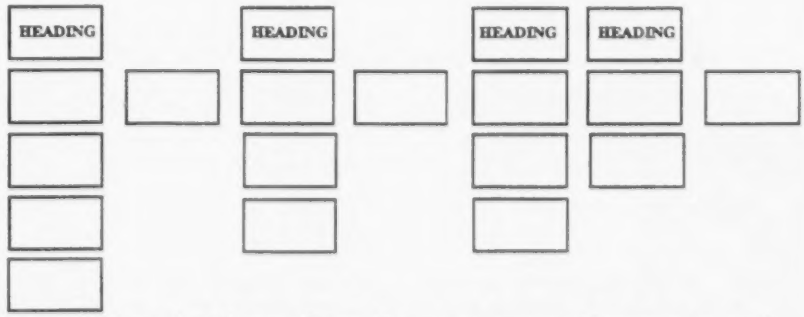
Steps:

1. Within each small group (five to seven members), use *Brainstorming* or *The Nominal Group Process* to identify the ideas for accomplishing a task or solving a problem.

2. Each group chooses their top five, different ideas and writes them on a 3 x 5 index card or a 3 x 5 Post-it note.

3. The first group to finish affixes their five ideas in a row across the wall. If using the index cards, either push-pins or masking tape will be needed to affix the cards to the wall.

4. Each group that follows reads the ideas already posted and decides if their ideas are related to the posted ideas or if they have a completely new idea. Ideas that are related should be placed below the idea it is related to; completely new ideas should be placed in the top row along with the original cards or Post-it-Notes. The groups should review the columns to make sure the ideas in each are related.



5. Identify a general heading that categorizes the ideas where there are more than one in each column. For those columns where there is only one card, discuss if that idea should be kept or discarded.

6. Develop an action plan to carry out the ideas.

Decision Making by Group Consensus

Perfect consensus means that everyone agrees what the decision should be. Unanimity, however, is often impossible to achieve. There are degrees of consensus, all of which bring about a higher quality decision than majority vote or other methods of decision making. *Consensus is more commonly defined as a collective opinion arrived at by a group of individuals working together under conditions that permit communications to be sufficiently open—and the group climate to be sufficiently supportive—for everyone in the group to feel that he / she has had a fair chance to influence the decision.* When a decision is made by consensus, all members understand the decision and agree to support it.

Guidelines for Decision Making by Group Consensus

1. Avoid arguing stubbornly for your own opinions. Present your position as clearly and logically as possible, but listen to other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.

2. Avoid changing your mind just to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only those solutions with which you are able to agree to at least some degree. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.

3. Avoid conflict-reducing procedures such as majority voting, tossing a coin, averaging, and bargaining.

4. Seek out differences of opinion. They are natural and expected. Try to involve everyone in the decision process. Different perspectives are needed to make the final, agreed-upon solution more likely to really work. Disagreements can improve the group's decision because a wide range of information and opinions improves the chances of the group to hit upon more adequate solutions.

5. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the next most acceptable alternative for all members.

6. Discuss underlying assumptions, listen carefully to one another, and encourage the participation of all members—these are especially important factors in reaching decisions by consensus.

Choosing Between Alternative Courses of Action

1. If several *similar* courses of action have been identified, this process will help clarify the relative merit of each. List the alternative courses of action:
   A.
   B.
   C.
   D.

2. Identify the important criteria that must be considered when choosing an alternative. For example, cost effectiveness might be one of the criteria; having widespread staff support might be another criteria.

3. Through discussion, come to consensus on a rank order for each of the alternatives on how well the alternatives fit or meet the criteria.

4. Total the points. Does your gut tell you this is the right alternative? If not, why not? Do you need to go through the ranking again?

		Rank Order Alternatives			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
CRITERIA FOR IMPLEMENTING	**1.**				
	2.				
	3.				
	4.				
	5.				
	RANK ORDER POINT TOTAL				

Force-Field Analysis

Define each alternative action: Committees or small task groups decide on the alternative actions they want to pursue.

1. **Identify "resisting forces":** For each action, brainstorm to identify those conditions or forces that help maintain the status-quo and resist change.
2. **Identify "helping forces":** Identify those circumstances or forces that would help achieve the desired goal. Focus on the helping forces that might assist you in overcoming the resisting forces.
3. **Focus:** Narrow the focus of your discussion to the resisting forces that you may be able to do something about. Check those you cannot change.
4. **Steps to Reduce Resisting Forces:** Identify the steps necessary to *reduce* the effects of the resisting forces or eliminate them, if possible.
5. **Develop an Action Plan:** Develop a plan to accomplish your goal.
6. **Report:** Each group reports its proposed set of Action Plans to entire faculty.

ACTION:

Helping Forces	Resisting Forces	Actions to Reduce/Eliminate R Forces

ACTION PLAN FORM

Action/Task	Who's responsible	Resources needed	Date due	Outcomes

Hijacked in the Desert Activity

Hijacked in the Desert Activity

Purpose: This activity provides group members with a nonthreatening opportunity to practice group skills and explore the ways in which they handle controversy. It allows group members:

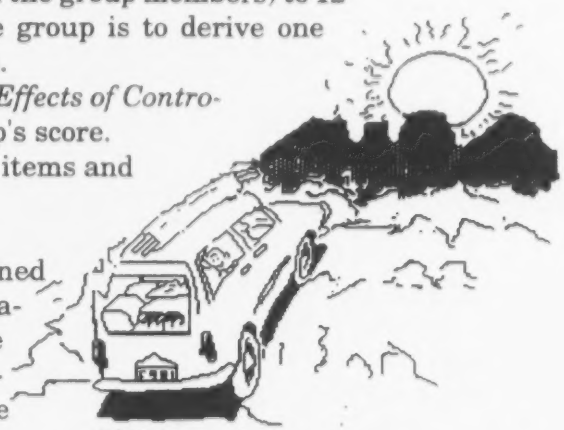
1. to practice (a) making group rules, (b) using positive group behaviors, and (c) observing group processes;
2. to practice including, respecting, and considering everyone's perspective during the discussion; and
3. to explore controversy behavior.

Materials: Copies of the *Hijacked in the Desert Scenario* and the *Rationale; sets* of *Positive Behavior Cards* for each group member; copies of *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire;* a bell, noisemaker, or clacker for the group to monitor its processes; and the overhead projector transparency *Group Tally Sheet* for *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire.*

Time: Approximately 45 minutes

Facilitator Instructions: The desert is a dangerous place in which to be stranded during the night or day. Effective decision making can be a matter of life or death. Genuine disagreements about the right course of action to take will arise and skills in managing controversy constructively are essential.

1. Introduce the exercise by stating its objective and reviewing the overall procedure and tasks.
2. Form groups with five/six members each.
3. Have groups establish rules for group interaction.
4. Introduce the scenario, have the groups read the description of the scenario.
5. Instruct the groups to rank the twelve possessions of the group from *1* (the most important possession for the survival of the group members) to *12* (the least important possession). The group is to derive one ranking to which every member agrees.
6. Have each group member compete the *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire* and tally the group's score.
7. Reveal the "expert" rankings for the 12 items and the rationale for those rankings.



Debriefing: Discuss what the groups learned from the activity about: (a) sharing information, (b) having everyone participate in the discussion, (c) listening to everyone's perspective, (d) having everyone agree on the final decision, and (e) handling controversy within the group.

Hijacked in the Desert Scenario

Your group is traveling in a range rover on uncharted trails in the desert headed toward a mesa in which there are caves rumored to contain early Native American petroglyphs. It is the last week in August. After driving around a small hill, you come upon a grizzled old man standing beside a broken down truck. He points a shotgun at you and demands that you get out of the vehicle. He has obviously committed some kind of crime and is seeking transportation to escape the law. You argue with him that all of you will die if left without any provisions. The old man agrees to allow you to take your choice of half of the twelve items in the vehicle. He gives you fifteen minutes to decide which ones.

You know that the nearest town is approximately fifty miles from where you are stranded. There is nothing closer. You will be missed when your group does not return. Several people know you are looking for the petroglyphs, but they will not be able to pinpoint your exact location. The old man promises to telephone the police once he is safely away, but you doubt that he will keep his word.

The terrain is rocky, arid, webbed with crevasses, and dotted with an occasional woody bush. The Weather Channel reported that the temperature would reach 108 degrees by mid-afternoon, making the surface temperature 128 degrees. The members of your group are all dressed in lightweight summer clothing and you all have hats and sunglasses. You know your group has several options which will determine what items you should take from the vehicle. You can choose to do one of the following but your group **must** stay together:

- walk to the nearest town
- stay where you are

Your group's task is to rank the following twelve items according to their importance to your survival, starting with *1* for the most important and proceeding to *12* for the least important. You will be allowed to keep only six of the items with you when the old man drives away.

_____ 20 ft. by 20 ft. heavy-duty, light blue canvas dining fly

_____ Book, *Plants of the Desert*

_____ Rearview mirror

_____ Large knife

_____ Flashlight (four battery size)

_____ One jacket per person

_____ Magnetic Compass

_____ One transparent, plastic ground cloth (6 ft. by 4 ft.) per person

_____ .38-caliber loaded pistol

_____ One five-gallon can of water

_____ Accurate map of the area

_____ Large box of kitchen matches

Rationale for Choosing Desert Items

The group faces three major problems:

1. **Dehydration**—caused by exposure to the sun, body activity which increases perspiration and respiration, and hot, dry air circulating next to the skin. To prevent dehydration group members should (a) remain calm and restrict movement during the day, (b) stay in the shade, (c) wear as many clothes as possible, and (d) drink as much water as they can.

2. **Signaling search parties**—items useful for signaling include a mirror, a canvas spread out for shelter which also can be spotted from the air, the light from a fire at night and the smoke by day, the flashlight, and the gun. The danger of having a gun in a stressful situation may outweigh its advantages as a signaling device.

3. **Protection from cold at night**—while the desert is hot during the day, temperatures plummet during the night and it is important to have warmth and shelter.

Without water, within 24 hours group members will experience impatience, nausea, and sleeplessness which will interfere with rational decision making. By limiting activity, remaining in the shade, and reducing evaporation by wearing clothing to cover the body, the group could probably survive three days without water. The mirror is the best, simplest, most important piece of survival equipment available. In sunlight, the mirror can generate five to seven million candle power which is powerful enough to be seen on the horizon. It can also be used to start a fire. If the group decides to walk out, traveling only at night, having to carry the canvas and wear jackets to prevent dehydration, all of the members will be dead by the second day.

The wisest choices are indicated below:

4 20 ft. by 20 ft. heavy-duty, light blue canvas dining fly

10 Book, *Plants of the Desert*

1 Rearview mirror

8 Large knife

7 Flashlight (four battery size)

2 One jacket per person

12 Magnetic Compass

5 One transparent, plastic ground cloth (6 ft. by 4 ft.) per person

9 .38-caliber loaded pistol

3 One two-quart plastic canteen per person, full of water

11 Accurate map of the area

6 Large box of kitchen matches

Alien Zoo Activity

Alien Zoo Activity

Purpose: This activity provides group members with a nonthreatening opportunity to practice group skills and explore the ways in which they handle controversy. It allows group members:

1. to practice (a) making group rules, (b) using positive group behaviors, and (c) observing group processes;
2. to practice including, respecting, and considering everyone's perspective during the discussion; and
3. to explore controversy behavior.

Materials: There are five separate zoo sheet masters. Each zoo sheet contains two cages (since each zoo sheet takes only half a page, each master has two sheets with the same zoo cages). Each page should be copied on different colored paper and cut in half. Each team gets one complete set of zoo sheets (five sheets, each a different color, containing a total of ten different zoo cages). The question and answer sheet should be reproduced on white paper. Each team gets one question and answer sheet.

You will also need sets of *Positive Behavior Cards* for each group member; copies of the *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire;* a bell, noisemaker, or clacker for the group to monitor its processes; and overhead projector transparencies which include (a) the Zoo Facts, which you should read to the group; (b) the question transparency on which to write the correct answers (solicited from the groups); (c) the entire Alien Zoo, which is used to explain the answers; and (d) the *Group Tally Sheet* for *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire.*

Time: Approximately 45 minutes

Facilitator Instructions: To conduct the activity, the following steps are suggested. Of course, you may adapt the activity to meet your needs.

1. Divide the participants into groups of five.
2. Have groups establish rules for group interaction.
3. Give each group member a different Alien Zoo colored sheet. (With five members in each group, there should be a total of ten different zoo animal cages represented on the sheets).
4. Give each group one white question and answer sheet.
5. Instruct the groups that their task is to answer the Alien Zoo Quiz questions accurately using all the information provided on all five of the Alien Zoo sheets.
6. Put the Alien Zoo Facts transparency on the overhead and read it.
7. Put the Alien Zoo Quiz questions on the overhead projector and leave them there. (Allow at least 15 to 20 minutes for the groups to answer the questions.)
8. Have each group member compete the *Effects of Controversy Questionnaire* and tally the group's score.
9. When all groups are finished, ask the groups to provide the answers—record on the transparency. Be prepared for controversy.
10. Be prepared to put the complete Alien Zoo transparency on the overhead projector to settle any disagreements.

Debriefing: Discuss what the groups learned from the activity about: (a) sharing information, (b) having everyone participate in the discussion, (c) listening to everyone's perspective, (d) having everyone agree on the final decision, and (e) handling controversy within the group.

Alien Zoo Activity

Alien Zoo Quiz Answers*

1.	Which is the most numerous family?	**Garumps**
2.	Which creature is missing an appendage?	**Sligers**
3.	In which family is a young one facing in a different direction than the rest?	**Badiles**
4.	In what other cage is the young Garump?	**Squizzies**
5.	Which is a kangaroo-like creature?	**Patoos**
6.	Whose young one has been swallowed?	**Klishes**
7.	In which family are the males and females different colors?	**Moonads**
8.	Which family has no adult male?	**Faslines**
9.	Which couple is expecting the birth of a female creature?	**Nozes**
10.	Which family haven't you listed above?	**Rawls**

* Yes, these are correct! If you have any questions call Dr. Patricia Duttweiler at NDPC (864) 656-2599.

Alien Zoo Facts

1. All the species have male and female members.

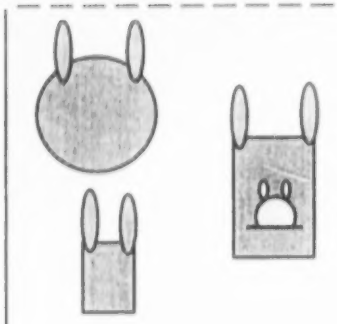
2. All males have a similar shape. All females have a similar shape that is different from the male shape.

3. Females of all the species bear young.

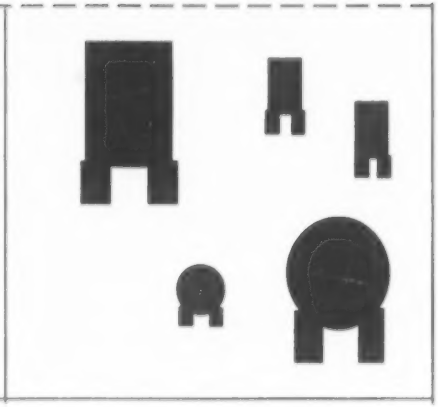
National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson University

Alien Zoo

Patoos



Garumps



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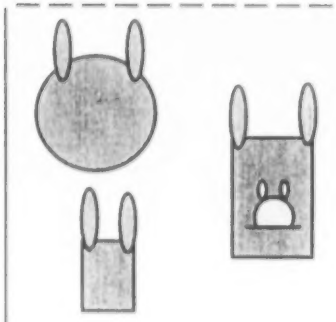
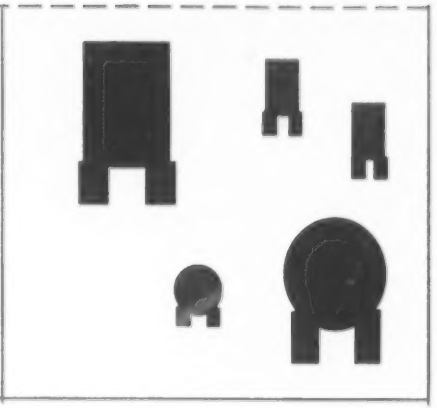


Garumps



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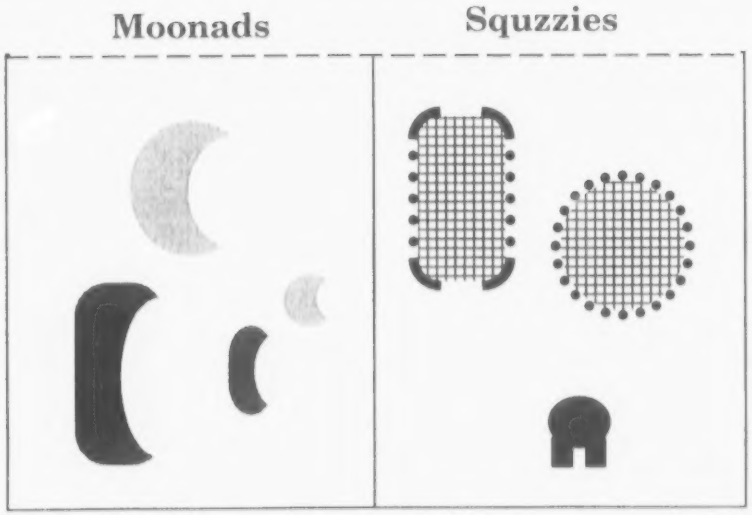

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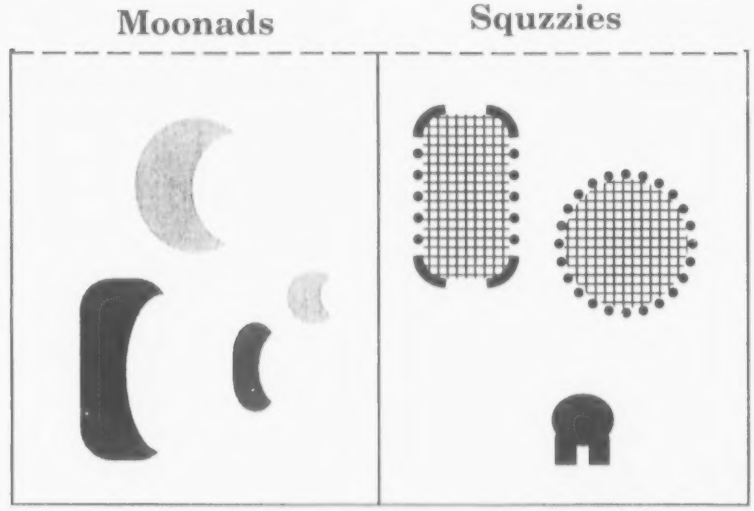

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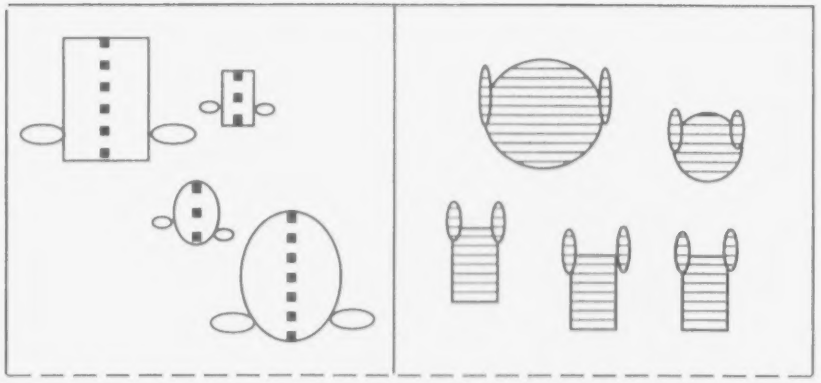

Klishes Rawls

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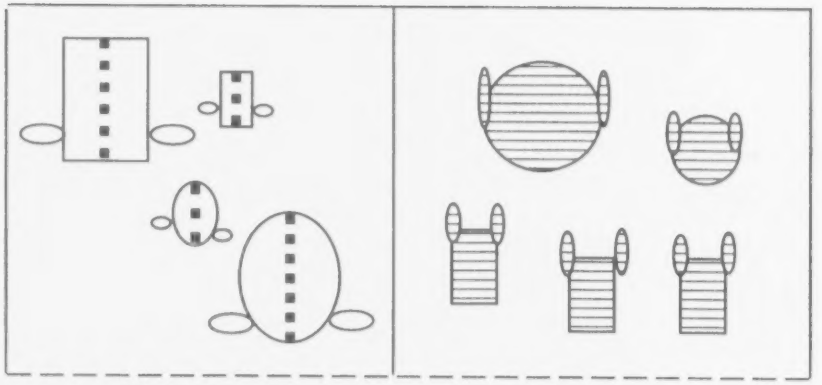

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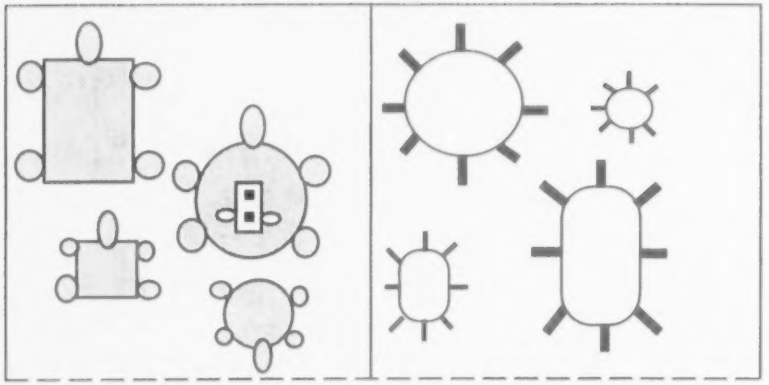

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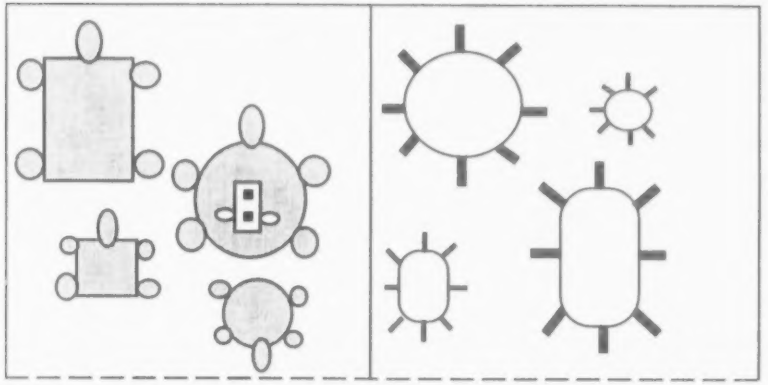

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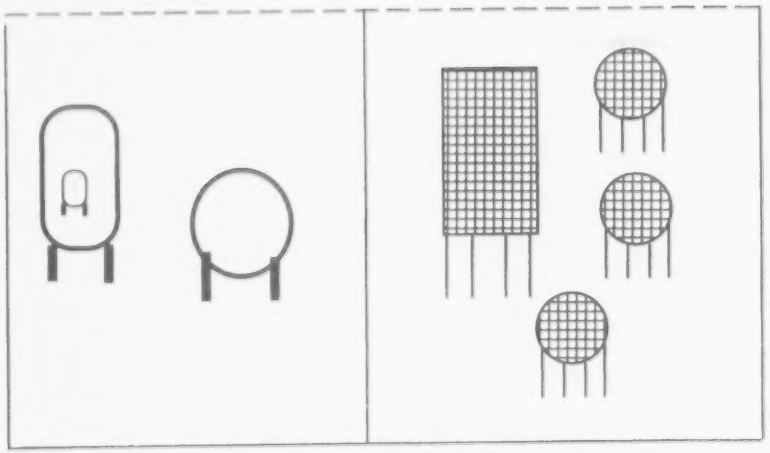
Alien Zoo

Nozes

Faslines



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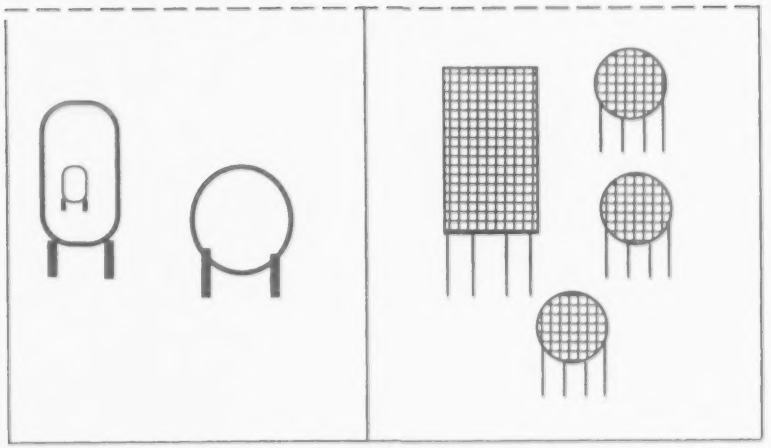

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1. Which is the most numerous family?
2. Which creature is missing an appendage?
3. In which family is a young one facing in a different direction than the rest?
4. In what other cage is the young Garump?
5. Which is a kangaroo-like creature?
6. Whose young one has been swallowed?
7. In which family are the males and females different colors?
8. Which family has no adult male?
9. Which couple is expecting the birth of a female creature?
10. Which family haven't you listed above?

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1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

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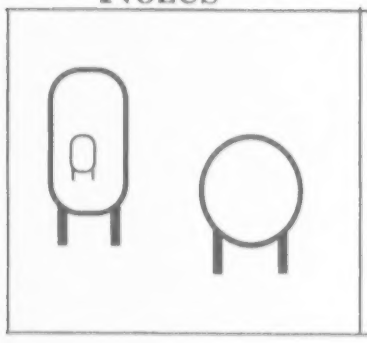
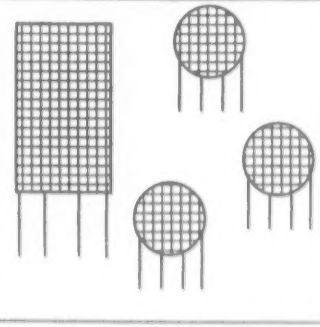
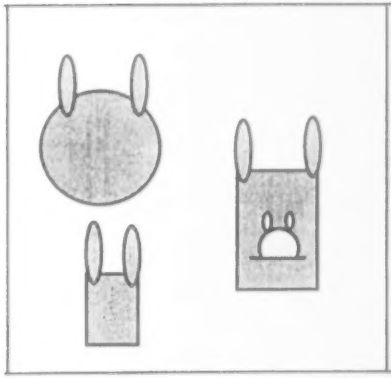


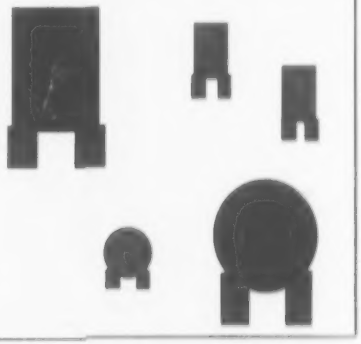
Faslines



Patoos

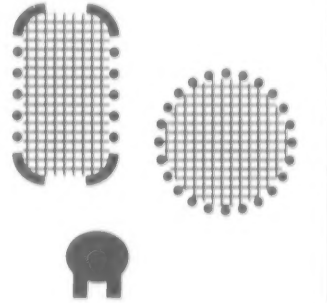


Garumps



Moonads

Squzzies



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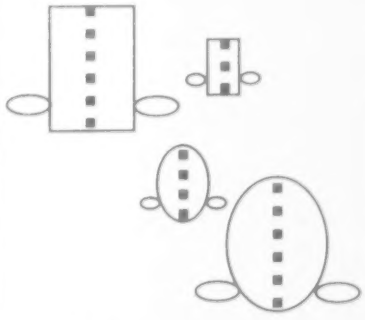
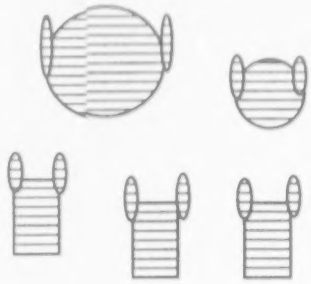


Rawls



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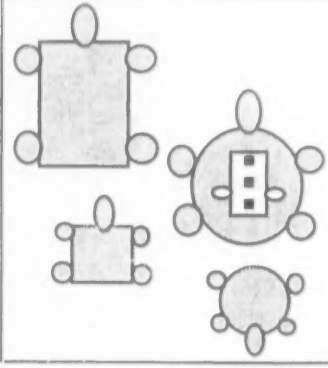
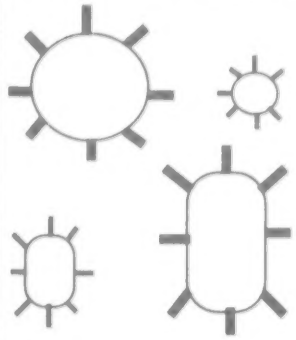


Sligers



Alien Zoo Quiz

1. Which is the most numerous family? _____
2. Which creature is missing an appendage? _____
3. In which family is a young one facing in a different direction than the rest? _____
4. In what other cage is the young Garump? _____
5. Which is a kangaroo-like creature? _____
6. Whose young one has been swallowed? _____
7. In which family are the males and females different colors? _____
8. Which family has no adult male? _____
9. Which couple is expecting the birth of a female creature? _____
10. Which family haven't you listed above? _____

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Assessing Group Effectiveness

Assessing Group Effectiveness

Purpose: Assessing how well a group is working is an essential part of improving the group. When group members have an opportunity to express their opinions about different aspects of the way the group functions, they are more likely to try and shape their own behavior in positive ways.

The *Participant Reaction Form* is a fast and easy way to generate feedback on how well the group is doing. Were the *Group's Decisions Effective?* goes beyond how the members feel about group processes and gets to the heart of group effectiveness. It doesn't matter how good the members feel about working together if the decisions they reach are not effective ones. *Diagnosing Your Group* provides a more in-depth assessment of why the group may not be functioning effectively. Talking about the responses on any of the forms is an important part of ensuring group improves. Reactions cannot make a difference unless all the members are aware of the feelings of other group members.

Materials: Copies of the assessment form for each group member.

Time: Ten to 30 minutes, depending on how long the discussion lasts. When a group first begins working together, more time should be allotted for discussion. As the group matures, very little time will be needed. It is always good, however, to check the opinions of the group members at intervals.

Participant Reaction Form

Please answer the following questions as they relate to your feelings about working with this group.

1. To what extent were your opinions and thoughts solicited and valued by the group?

   4 Quite a lot

   3 Moderately

   2 Only a little

   1 Not at all

2. Suggest three words that best describe your feelings about the group (or its members) at this point.

3. How committed do you feel toward the goals of this group?

   4 Quite committed

   3 Moderately committed

   2 Moderately uncommitted

   1 Quite uncommitted

4. How much frustration or tension did you feel as a result of other people's behaviors during the discussion?

   4 Completely lacking in tension

   3 Only slightly bothered by tension

   2 Moderately tense and frustrated

   1 Completely tense and frustrated

5. How good was the eventual decision of the group?

   4 Quite good

   3 Moderately good

   2 Not very good

   1 Quite bad

6. Who do you feel was the most influential member in the group's decision-making process during this particular task?

7. Who do you feel had the most knowledge on this particular task?

Were the Group's Decisions Effective?

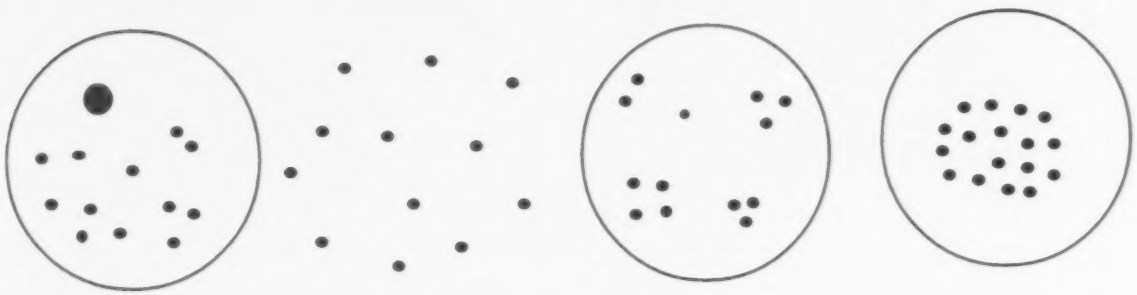
INSTRUCTIONS: Please check either *yes* or *no* for each of the statements below.

	YES	NO
1. Were the decisions made by the group of high-quality?	❍	❍
2. Did the decisions made by the group address the problem?	❍	❍
3. Are the decisions made by the group workable?	❍	❍
4. Will the decisions made by the group have widespread support?.	❍	❍
5. Were your skills fully used?	❍	❍
6. Was your opinion taken into consideration?	❍	❍
7. Did the group use the time efficiently?	❍	❍
8. Did the group use its resources efficiently?	❍	❍
9. Are you committed to implementing the decision?	❍	❍
10. Do you feel better able to solve such problems in the future?	❍	❍
11. Do you feel the group is working well together?	❍	❍
12. Are you glad you are a part of the group?		

Diagnosing Your Group

Question 1: Indicate which of the diagrams best represents the decision-making relations that exist among the members of this group. Place an X beside the figure that you feel best represents the group's behavior.

1) Authoritarian **2) Individual** **3) Competitive** **4) Cooperative**



Question 2: What level of trust exists in your group? How comfortable are you saying what you really think or feel in this group as long as it is not off-task or destructive.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

Not at all comfortable saying what I really think

Somewhat comfortable saying what I really think

Very comfortable saying what I really think

Question 3: What are the strengths of this group?

Question 4: What is keeping this group from being as effective or productive as it might be?

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